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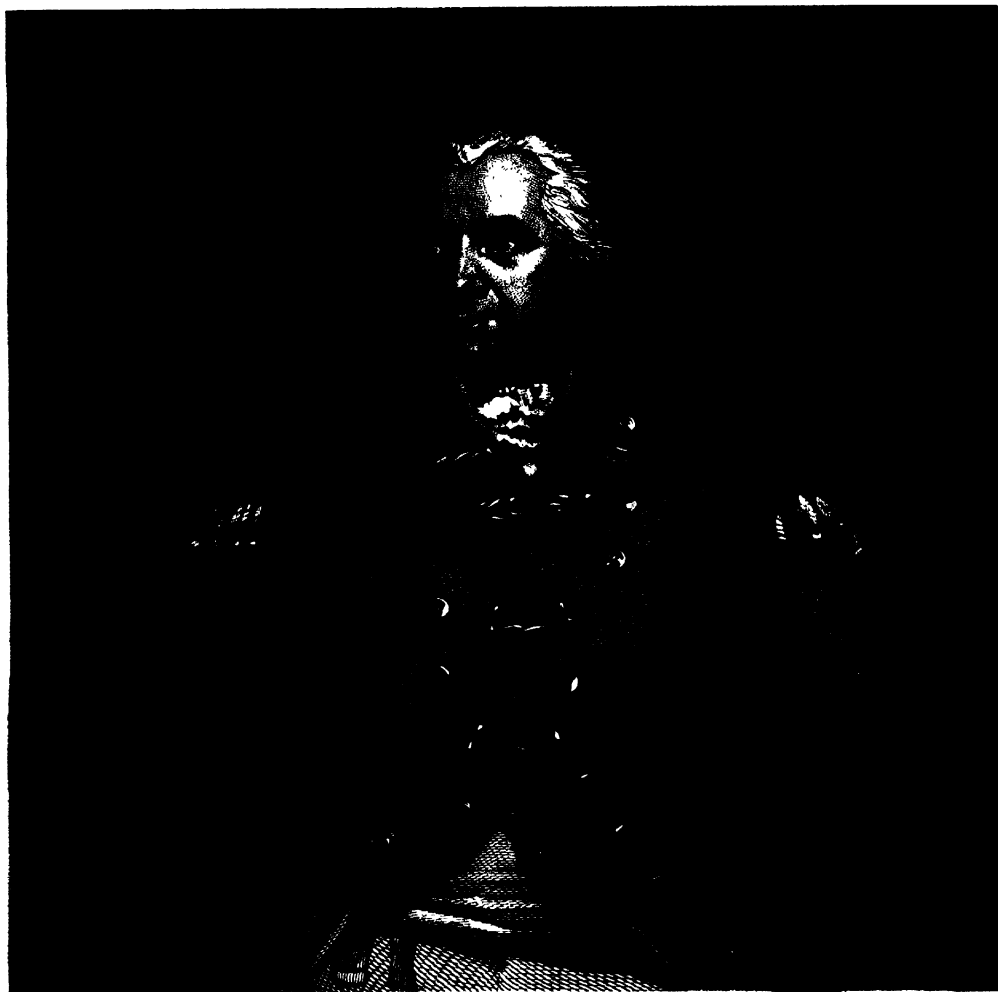
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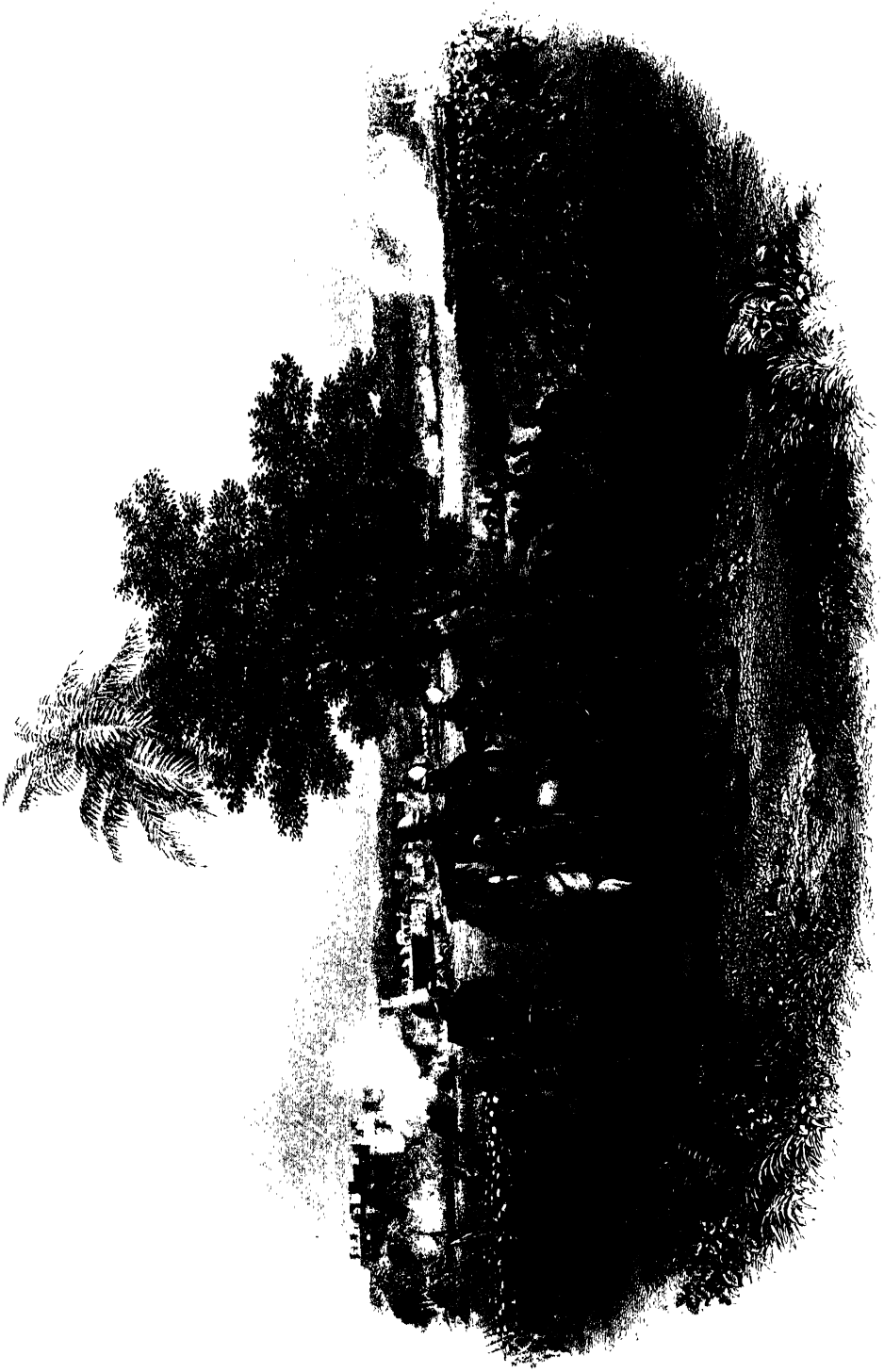
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THE MAN IN THE SUIT

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Pondicherry. Notwithstanding the strangeness of making a reference to the supreme council for French affairs in India, concerning a matter which was too mean for the French commander, or his mercantile colleagues in direction of French affairs at Myhie, the English, still commonplace, in their own common-sense way, proceeded to appeal to the council for their property and redress of injuries. The tone of these French communications was as devoid of true courtesy as of justice and honour. Further correspondence between the two factories of Myhie and Tellicherry ensued, but no person at either factory understood the language spoken at the other sufficiently well to carry on a clear correspondence, and delays and mistakes resulted, until it was mutually agreed to transact business in Portuguese, as men of that nation, or natives—half-caste Portuguese—resided at both places.

The native chiefs were not slow in learning the true state of feeling between the English and French, and did their best to inflame their jealousies and enmities, fearing that both might unite for purposes of territorial aggrandizement. The Boyanore pretended to ally himself with the English; a "Nair," named Curringboda, ostensibly attached himself to the French, and both European powers were placed by their cunning native allies in an attitude of anger and defiance. No English were allowed to cross the French borders, nor were the latter permitted to pass into British territory; if such a circumstance by chance occurred, the intruders were chased like spies or poachers. The vessels of either nation were forbidden to enter the harbour of the other. A French "muncha" persisted in approaching the harbour of Tellicherry, and when warned off, the crew used insulting language. The offended council at Tellicherry demanded from that at Myhie an apology for the trespass and rudeness of their mariners, and also demanded explanations as to the object of the muncha's voyage, which the English alleged was to land ammunition and military stores for the supply of the Rajah of Cotiote, in order that he might have means of making war upon the Boyanore, so as to prostrate or enfeeble the ally of the English. The object of the French was to make war upon the British indirectly, and without incurring the responsibility of appearing in arms. The French commander apologised in most complaisant terms, which might have been intended for irony, for the rudeness of his sailors, but took no notice of the serious impeachment of stirring up feuds to the damage of the English, and supplying their known enemies with munitions of war. Thus, step

by step, the French were accumulating an amount of injuries to the English, which no attempt was made to explain away, soften, or compensate; and the irritated British were nursing their pent-up rage for the hour of decisive action. The diary of the Tellicherry factory from November 7 to December, 1725, is a journal of grievances against the French.

In 1726 the French and English were very near coming into conflict. The Boyanore was attacked by the French. The latter pretended various grievances, but the real motive was to weaken the relative power of the English by the conquest of their most ostensible ally, and to produce a moral effect among the native powers, by showing that the English were not able to protect their friends against France, and that to incur the ill-will of the latter was destructive to all native powers, whatever their European alliances. This was a bold motive, and the measure was well calculated to carry it out. The Boyanore claimed assistance, for which he offered to pay, a condition upon which the English insisted. They sent him one hundred nairs, but the Boyanore had neither money nor probity, and as he had already contracted a large debt for military supplies, they were unwilling to allow him to increase it. The results were that the Boyanore demanded a truce with the French, and came to terms. The French accomplished their object, the prestige of the English was lowered, and their characteristic habit of adopting a costly economy was once more brought prominently out.

The French were emboldened, and joined the natives that were hostile to the English in every demonstration of ill-feeling. It was at this juncture that the French united in a pretended hunting expedition with certain native chiefs, a circumstance incidentally referred to in a former chapter to show the relation of the English to the native powers around them. The conduct of the French on that occasion was palpably hostile, and the English demanded satisfaction. The reply was somewhat submissive, as if its authors were conscious that they had gone too far, and that they might incur the displeasure of the authorities of Pondicherry; or else they were alarmed at the practical manner in which the English had shown their disapproval of "the hunting party" of native chiefs and French soldiers, by volleys of grape-shot and musket balls. At all events, the tone of the French was apologetic; they declared they merely went a hunting, and were surprised to find the English so unneighbourly, and hoped, for the future, to "live in peace and harmony with all," especially their



European neighbours, and chiefly their British friends. Soon after, the French fired upon an English hunting party—a *bond fide* party of pleasure—and demands for redress were of course made. The French pleaded unqualified innocence. The answer of the chief of the English factory is one of the most remarkable specimens of English diplomacy ever disclosed. The plain-speaking Briton was not to be soothed by heartless words, but in direct terms informed his French correspondents what he thought of them. It is so unique, that the reader cannot fail to peruse it with interest. It is signed by all the members of the council, but the style identifies it as the production of the chief, Robert Adams. The "Cuny Nair" referred to, is the native leader, previously termed "Curringboda," the English having been accustomed to term him "Cunny," or "Cunny Nair," in writing or speaking of him:—

*To M. Tremisot and his Council.*

*Tellicherry, October, 21st, 1736. O.S.*

GENTLEMEN,—We just now received yours of this date, by which you acknowledge the receipt of ours of the 16th instant. By this we find, as we have always done, commit what you will, are never at a loss for an evasion, which treatment is grown so old, that it will hardly pass for current at this time of day. It is with satisfaction find you confess to have had some of your people out those days we hunted, which we designed for our recreation, till obstructed by you and your accomplice, Cuny Nair, who of himself would never have dared to have broken the peace with us without your inciting and assisting him, as he did in conjunction with your people, by firing on us first, which was a good reason for us the next day to go with more caution and preparation in our own limits and conquest. It is very unaccountable you of the French nation should not only with your money and ammunition encourage the country against us, but appear personally yourselves in an hostile manner, and till you can deprive us of the evidence of our senses, we shall not fail to continue to charge the French with the breach of the good harmony between the two crowns in Europe, as expressed in our officers' and soldiers' narrative sent you of the actions of the 12th and 13th instant.

We did in ours of the 16th, reply to all you wrote, and did then signify that Cuny Nair to the 12th instant was esteemed by us a friend, and might have continued so, had you not beguiled him with vain promises of protection and charges to disturb us. If this is your meaning of loving tranquillity, we are strangers to it, and shall be proud of being accounted so. As to the contents of what you wrote, we are, and always have been, observers of the peace and good harmony between the two crowns, and find with concern our patiently bearing all your insults, both by sea and land, has not only given you the opportunity to proceed as you have in this hostile manner, but has encouraged you to do what you have lately done with Cuny Nair; but your design not taking effect, are resolved to deny it. Otherwise, might have been as open as Monsieur Boisson of the *Lyllie* was, when he not only seized and detained, but plundered the *Deury* grab of Mangalore.

These your treatments are so plain and obvious, that we need not enlarge on them, and that now you should begin, as did on the 12th and 13th instant, to give us new testimonies of your continuing to disturb us, does not at all

answer your expressions of this date, not to give us any disturbance by land or sea. We should think ourselves very happy, did your actions answer your writing; then we could be able to say, as we have always made it our study and endeavours to be in good harmony with you; but while you agitate, assist, and excite the country people in friendship with us, not only to take up arms, but appear with them against us in an hostile manner as above, you must pardon us if, in making the just and true representation, we occasion you any uneasiness or confusion, for we cannot but say, your usage, for these three years last past, has been without regard to laws of nations or nature; and as to Cuny Nair, who has broke his faith with us, whenever we think convenient to call him to an account for it, shall not, we hope, find any of your people with him; which will induce us to be, gentlemen,

Your most humble and most obedient servants,

ROBERT ADAMS.  
JOHN JOHNSON.  
STEPHEN LAW.  
WM. FORBES.  
HUGH HOWARD.

Probably, under the circumstances in which it was penned, no communication could have been more pointed and prudent. The French had all the advantage of style and dexterity; the English, whatever their disadvantages in those particulars, were so "downright straightforward," as to cause confusion to their intriguing rivals, and leave them little power to reply to any purpose.

Soon after the suave expressions of the French in this correspondence, the English received certain intelligence of the hostility of Cuny Nair. It will be recollected by the reader, from the perusal of previous chapters, that there were several hills in the immediate vicinage of Tellicherry. These, if occupied strongly by the British, would enable them to command the plains and the land approaches: if occupied by an enemy, Tellicherry would be untenable, and on this account the situation was deemed ineligible by military men, as requiring a larger garrison than the amount of its commerce could afford. Myhie, on the other hand, could not be commanded, while its own position was elevated and strong. One of the hills near Tellicherry, the occupation of which by an enemy might prove perilous, was called Putinha, and this Cuny Nair intended to seize. The English reasonably believed that this movement was impelled by French instigation, which the subsequent conduct of the authorities at Myhie proved. The English anticipated Cuny, and occupied the hill themselves. There was another hill under the guns of the English fort, called Caria Cuna, and as soon as the French perceived the movement of the British towards Putinha, they seized the other eminence. Another correspondence ensued, which issued in a conference. One Louet visited Tellicherry, and debated affairs with the British, but this

conference did not prove satisfactory. Stephen Law and William Forbes proceeded as an English deputation to Myhie. The hospitalities shown in each case to the delegates softened the asperity of the contest, and the affair ended in "a drawn battle," both parties abandoning the military positions assumed, and Cuny keeping himself out of the way. On the whole, the dispute ended favourably to the British, for, practically, they succeeded in their object, although their demands for apology were not satisfied.

The military expenses of both British and French factories now so alarmed the directors of each company, that orders were sent out to cultivate a good understanding. The French only intended to cultivate it so long as necessity constrained, and hoped to recruit the sinews of war for a better opportunity. The English were in earnest, and orders were issued to the council of Tellicherry to reduce their armed forces, and to cultivate a kind intercourse with their Gallic neighbours. As the distance between the two settlements was so short, it was easy to reciprocate courtesies and hospitalities, which were for a while abundant, and apparently cordial, but the French continued to intrigue with the native princes against the English, and to the disturbance of the country, as far as their clever but mischievous influence reached.

In 1728 a treaty of peace and alliance was signed by the governors of Bombay and Pondicherry, and the directors of the East India Company in London, and the president and council in Bombay believed that differences were healed; but the Tellicherry people knew better, and while carrying out the directions of their superiors with frankness, did not relax their vigilance, nor increase their confidence in the political honesty of their new allies.

The English, who had been long enduring, became at length testy, and rather disposed to end harassing disputes, suspicions, and disquietude by arms. They ceased to be anxious for peace with French or natives, although they did not then see on what a grand scale of action the warlike powers of themselves and their countrymen in India should be soon tested. As the year 1740 approached, the tone of feeling in Bombay and Madras, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, at Surat and on the Hoogly, was that of a sullen conviction that, some time or other, French gasconade and aggression would provoke war. The English did not desire it, but, as the French say, they "accepted the situation,"—they gradually conformed their minds to the conviction that it was best to fight it out, unless some decisive measure of peace in Europe should harmonise elements which so

actively repelled one another. This state of mind probably prevailed more at Tellicherry than anywhere else in India, from the juxtaposition of the settlement and garrison of Myhie. The pugnacious feeling created in the minds of the English by the conduct of the French found vent sometimes in a wrong direction, and made them too hasty in entering into native quarrels, which, in a calmer frame, they would have avoided. The combativeness thus called forth again reacted upon their tone and bearing towards the French. Events beyond their control, and the working of which was hidden, were preparing them for the development of the warlike genius, activity, and daring, which so soon made them masters of an empire. Probably the disturbances and disorder within the factory at Myhie, in 1739, prevented the occurrence then of the collision to which circumstances were fast ripening. The consciousness that the English were the stronger also averted overt acts on the part of the French, who were still further held in check by the derangements of their commercial and economical affairs.

In 1740 tidings arrived in India that England had declared war against Spain, and that it was believed in Europe France would, as usual, espouse the cause of the enemies of England. Previous to the arrival of this news, a war of correspondence was waged; but the advent of such information created an excitement which could with difficulty be repressed. The French, as usual when any difference ensued, and they supposed themselves strong enough, made hostile demonstrations. The British at Tellicherry had fortified one of the neighbouring hills, called Andolamala; the French formed intrenchments near it. The English, regarding this as an aggression, did not, as formerly, write blunt letters, or hold conferences, but directed a small party of soldiers, under the command of an ensign, to assault the trenches. This was admirably executed. The attacking party was small, and but one European officer with it. The French opened a heavy fire upon the advancing party when within range; but so rapidly, boldly, and orderly did the British charge, that they entered the trenches with little loss, and drove out the enemy with so much ease as to excite the contempt of the natives and deeply to humiliate the vaunting soldiers by whom the trenches were so insolently opened and occupied. The humiliation of the Gauls did not end with their defeat; they did not dare to strike another blow; but instead of gallantly seeking to retrieve their disgrace, they endeavoured to bribe the native chiefs to make war in their stead. The result of the action to the English was a great in-

crease of their moral influence and self reliance. The event did not certainly dispose them to put up with further insults, which the French continued to offer in such way as to leave a declaration of hostilities on the part of the English on such ground impossible, while the affronts, nevertheless, irritated and annoyed.

Tellicherry was the focus, or, at all events, the principal focus, when there were several foci, of quarrel with the French. The factory at Ajengo, the progress and general troubles of which were related in a former chapter, was one of the points around which French influence and menace gathered; but as the Dutch preferred learned despatches to war, so the French preferred gasconade and display to any immediate appeal to arms, although they made it evident enough they were willing to strike but dared not. The English factors at Ajengo were as invulnerable to French satire as to Dutch casuistry: they pursued the even tenor of their way, and carried on their correspondence with the French with much less respect for their adversaries than when addressing the Dutch, notwithstanding the overlaid courtesy and compliment of the letters and despatches of the former.

At Carwar and Honawar, on the Malabar coast, the English were annoyed by the presence of French agents in the neighbourhood, fomenting disputes between the native chiefs, stimulating them against the English, and sowing seeds of envy and anger among the neighbouring Dutch and Portuguese, which were as prolific as those who scattered them could desire. Still it was at Tellicherry not only so far as Western India was concerned, but taking all India into account, that intrigues and open acts of hostility on the part of the French had the best opportunity of development; and when all was comparatively calm in the British settlements of Malabar, disturbances between British and French broke out again at Tellicherry and Myhie. The French troubles appeared to have been hushed to slumber at the other stations—even St. David's was comparatively little tormented by Pondicherry—when at Tellicherry there occurred new alarms and discontents.

In 1741 the expectations of a general war in Europe were yet more prevalent in India than they were, as above noticed, in the beginning of 1740. France and England, although virtually at war from 1740, were not actually in hostilities until 1744; accordingly, authors date the commencement of this war very variously, some considering that it properly commenced in 1742, others before that time, and another class of writers dating its commencement from 1744.

It was natural that the Europeans in India should in their own political relations be keenly susceptible of any impression from symptoms which portended a struggle between the two great maritime powers of Europe, when it is remembered how frequently their swords were drawn against one another. The relations of the two great contiguous European countries as to peace and war over a long period of history may be thus stated. There broke out wars between England and France at the following dates, and which lasted for the following periods:—"1100 for two years; 1141, one year; 1161, twenty-five years; 1211, fifteen years; 1224, nineteen years; 1294, five years; 1339, twenty-one years; 1368, fifty-two years; 1442, forty-nine years; 1492, one month; 1512, two years; 1521, six years; 1549, one year; 1557, two years; 1562, two years; 1627, two years; 1666, one year; 1689, ten years; 1702, eleven years; 1744, four years; 1756, seven years; 1776, seven years; 1793, nine years; and lastly, in 1803, twelve years; making in all 265 years of war within a period of 727 years."

The ideas of French power which prevailed amongst Englishmen, and amongst the men of other European nations in 1741, were very different from those which now prevail:—"During the early period of these wars, our continental rival continued preponderant, and the revenue and population considerably exceeded that of this country. The revenue of Louis XIV. was computed at nearly three times that of Charles II. The alliance against France, cemented by the perseverance of William, rendered victorious by the talents of Marlborough, relieved us from the dreaded overthrow of the political equilibrium; but even after our splendid successes, it continued a common opinion among foreigners, as among ourselves, that the resources of the French were more solid, and that they would soon equal or surpass us in those arts which form the constituents of national wealth.

"In the reign of George I., this country bore to France in point of population the proportion of only forty-five to one hundred. Were we to continue the parallel, we should find that as to population we shall probably overtake our ancient rival before the lapse of many years. Meantime, those who know that the issue of a military struggle mainly depends not so much on population as on disposable revenue, will be satisfied that at present we should have no cause to dread a contest single-handed with that power, against which our forefathers were obliged to seek continental alliances."\*

\* Colburn's *United Service Magazine*, January, 1857.

Between 1740 and 1744 the animosity between the two nations was intense, and their resources were squandered in indirect war. From the death of Charles VI., Emperor of Germany, in 1741, the certainty of an open and ostensible rupture between England and France at no distant date was obvious to every reflecting person in Europe and among Europeans in Asia.

At Tellicherry and Myhie, the grand struggle during this brief interval consisted of efforts to prevent either factory from its usual participation in the trade of pepper—a common source of quarrel between European nations in the East, and one peculiarly embittered. During that time, matters generally went in favour of the English; they secured by their more direct diplomacy the confidence of the native chiefs, who admired the French more, but trusted the English better. The English continued to receive lavish expressions of French compliment, and replied by unpolished, plain spoken, but on the whole civil letters, the writers of which cared nothing for French courtesy, and had no reliance on French honour. Meanwhile, the British had taken up the French game of intriguing with the native chiefs against their neighbours, and played it well; so well, that for eight months the settlements of France were blockaded by native powers at English instigation. Among the French no man, at least no public man, understood the true policy to be pursued by a European power in India, except the gallant and wise Labourdonnais. In 1740 his Asiatic services were so appreciated in France, that not only was he welcomed to his country with acclamation, but the honour was conferred upon him of returning to the East in command of both a fleet and army. He had previously, as the reader has seen, shown his warlike genius at Myhie in a comparatively humbler although honourable capacity; at the time now under review, he equally displayed it as a sagacious statesman and naval commander. On the 13th of November, 1741, he arrived at Myhie not only with naval and military authority, but as supervisor of French trade. Upon his arrival, he opened a correspondence with the English factors at Tellicherry, proposing accommodation and friendship. He was sincere; and the language in which he expressed himself showed the goodness of his heart and the greatness of his nature. He of course objected to those demonstrations of force which the English so frequently made against the French settlements in favour of their native enemies; and requested that in an attack contemplated by the French upon the Boyanore and Namburis, who were then blockading Myhie from the land, that

the English would not send succours of war either by land or sea; and if English boats came within a certain distance in spite of his warning and request, he begged that he might not be considered hostile if they were searched, to ascertain whether munitions were conveyed in them for his foes. His request was reasonable, and it would have been impossible to convey what duty and necessity dictated in language more manly, honest, just, and conciliatory. The reply of the English chief was civil and cold; he admitted the propriety of searching English boats, but took no notice of the other demands. The fact was, the predecessors of Labourdonnais had brought about a state of things which could not be removed by the kind and sincere policy of that great and good man. The French had entered upon a certain game, into which they had forced the English; and the latter were not likely to allow them to draw the stakes when there was a prospect of success to English pertinacity and common sense.

Labourdonnais stormed the native intrenchments, defeated Boyanore in the open field; followed up his successes in a short but brilliant campaign, and compelled the troublesome Indian to cede territory around the factory at Myhie, within a circumference swept by a radius of an English mile.\* The French commander and supervisor then visited the English, for whom he had a cordial respect, which they appreciated, and received him with distinguished honour. His object was to conciliate and reconcile, as a Christian obligation, and a sound policy in the Asiatic interests of France, of the prospects of which he alone, amongst all the French officers and traders of the time, is known to have had foresight.

He proposed a treaty, several articles of which were characterized by justice, good sense, and moderation. One of these articles stipulated the mutual abandonment of all outlying forts, and military positions which only served as demonstrations of hostility, and created to both factories expenses destructive of the profits of their trade. The English freely accepted this point, for they had confidence in Labourdonnais, although not in his countrymen generally. Another article was that all differences between the natives and either the French or English, should be arbitrated by that one of the two European powers not mixed up in the dispute, and in case the native chiefs refused the arbitration, a combined force of French and English should enforce what appeared just to both. This was too complicated a proposal for the English factors; they preferred ending their

\* *Diaries of Bombay and Tellicherry.*

own quarrels without French assistance, and they were not disposed to aid the French against the natives in quarrels which did not involve the interests of the East India Company. The proposal of Labourdonnais was transmitted for decision to the council of Bombay. After much deliberation the articles were agreed to and ratified at Bombay and Pondicherry.

The British, after the signature, became more hopeful of peace, and reduced their military forces; they also razed the forts of Putinha, Andolamala, and Termala. Labourdonnais being honest, and in earnest, the French forts of Canamala, Peringature, Chimbera, and Poitera, were razed. Labourdonnais appeared no more upon the western shores of India, but in other directions he made his genius and warlike power felt while the war between the two nations raged in the East. According to Raynal he was the first who suggested the desirableness of dispatching royal ships of war to the Indian seas.

On the withdrawal of Labourdonnais from Myhie, a factor named Leyrit assumed the government. He continued to maintain good relations with the English as recommended by Labourdonnais. The neighbouring native chiefs were alarmed at seeing the amity of the two European nations; and well understanding how easy it was to disturb it, they agreed among themselves to adopt whatever schemes were most likely to bring to pass some interruption to the prevailing harmony. The Boyanore, now an ally of the French, obstructed English trade, and the French, notwithstanding the binding obligations of the recent treaty, did not adopt any means to persuade or deter him from doing so, as they reaped a temporary profit by his proceedings. The King of Colestry defied and irritated the French, assuming that he did so as the champion of the English. A coolness sprung up; yet neither party was disposed to break the peace. In 1744 the chief of Telli-cherry informed the president at Myhie that war between their respective countries had

been declared in Europe, but he proposed that, nevertheless, they should remain good neighbours; and to prevent any misinterpretations of the good understanding, it was agreed that their troops should not fire upon one another within sight of the factory flags. The English went still farther in their peaceful dispositions, and having been very successful in purchases of pepper, they sent eighty candies of it to Myhie. The French returned naval salutes, and restored English deserters. The two companies encouraged these peaceful manifestations, and the chief French authority in Pondicherry ratified all that had been done at Myhie. The president and council of Bombay believed that such a compromise was injurious to the interests of the English nation generally, and more especially in the East, and deemed it better that the two nations should carry on the war at home and abroad until victory decided the mastery. The English government was of the same opinion. The chief at Telli-cherry was censured by the government of Bombay, pointing out to him that the French were merely espousing a truce to gain time, their Eastern forces being inferior to those of England. At Myhie this was more evidently the case, as the exchequer of the factory was drained by pompous military spectacles, and continuous military expeditions, and once more, in the moment of perplexity, the Boyanore invested the place.

Such were the positions of the two powers in India, when the first bolts of war fell and shook the realms over which the mighty storm, long preparing, at last spent its force. There was a capriciousness and singularity about French and English relations in Western India. When the parent powers were at perfect peace, their factories were waging "a little war;" when there was open hostility in the British Channel, the factories were exchanging salutes, making presents, offering compliments, and vowing perpetual amity. It is necessary now to turn to other departments of the field of struggle, and to relate the progress of the war itself.

## CHAPTER LXVIII.

WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN THE EAST—SURRENDER OF MADRAS—SIEGES AND ASSAULTS OF FORT ST. DAVID BY THE FRENCH—SIEGE OF PONDICHERRY BY THE BRITISH—PEACE IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE TREATY OF AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

WAR between France and England having been declared, and the efforts of the traders of both nations *in some* of the stations in India to preserve neutrality having proved unavailing, the conflict began at Madras in 1746. On the 14th of September that year, a French fleet, under the gallant Labourdonnais, anchored between four and five leagues to the south of Madras, and landed six hundred soldiers, seamen, and marines. The troops moved by land, while the fleet coasted during the remainder of that day and the morning of the ensuing. About mid-day of the 15th, they arrived before the city. Labourdonnais effected, without opposition, the landing of the remaining French infantry. The assailing force consisted of more than one thousand French, four hundred sepoys, drawn from the various French stations, chiefly Pondicherry, and four hundred blacks of Madagascar, called Caffres, who had been employed as a garrison in the French settlement of the Mauritius, and were well-disciplined by Labourdonnais himself. The troops landed were little short of two thousand men, and an equal number were on board the fleet to act as occasion might require.

The garrison was by no means adequate to cope with such a force, led by one of the best commanders of the age. The soldiers were two hundred, one hundred of whom were English volunteers, and were utterly inexperienced in war. These were all that could be relied upon. There were between three and four thousand Portuguese Indians who sympathized more with the French than with the British, and were not armed. The Syrian Christians and Jews were pretty numerous, and would have proved faithful to the English, but they were not warlike, and the British did not place that confidence in them which they deserved. Concerning the quality of the garrison, Professor Wilson remarks:—"A letter to a proprietor of India stock, published in 1750, by a person who was evidently concerned in the government of Madras at the time, states, that the soldiers were not only few, but of a very indifferent description; that the town was ill provided with ammunition stores, and that its fortifications were in a ruinous condition: the necessity for rigid economy at home, having withheld the means of maintaining the establishment abroad in a state of efficiency."

The governor was summoned to surrender, and refused. A bombardment opened from the whole fleet, and the artillery landed with the invaders. Notwithstanding the weakness of the defence, the bombardment was continued five days without any attempt to storm. The troops of the garrison were worn out, the native inhabitants filled with terror, and the half-caste Portuguese disaffected; the fortifications could no longer protect their defenders, and as an assault must be successful, the president offered a ransom. Labourdonnais was too much of a politician to accept the like. He knew that if the French flag was seen floating above Madras, it would produce a moral effect not inferior to a similar triumph at even Goa or Batavia, and he insisted upon surrender. Mr. Mill describes him as coveting "the glory of displaying French colours on the ramparts of St. George," which is not accordant with the temper, character, or conduct of Labourdonnais: he was solely actuated by a sense of duty and honour, and a clear view of the policy that suited his country.

While he insisted upon capitulation, he pledged his honour to restore the settlement upon payment of a moderate ransom of 100,000 pagodas, or rather bonds for the payment of that amount were given by the president, and the city surrendered. The conduct of Labourdonnais was as gentle while a victor, as it was fearless in war. He had not lost a man during the bombardment, and as he did all in his power to avoid bloodshed, only four or five English perished. His care in directing the shells, so as to inflict as little injury as possible upon private property, enabled him to effect his conquest with only the destruction of a few houses of the inhabitants. Labourdonnais gained a complete ascendancy over all with whom he came in contact; he was beloved alike by English and natives, his bearing was not that of a victor, but of a friend: even of his private fortune, he contributed to alleviate distresses, which, as a French officer, he could not avoid inflicting. History has not often recorded one so brave, so good, so tender, and so just in victory as this great and glorious man.

An English fleet had been dispatched from England, but the admiral having died, the command devolved upon the senior captain, who was deficient in skill and spirit, and evaded

a conflict with Labourdonnais, remaining in the harbour of Trincomalee, so that the French admiral was in effect not only master of Madras, but of the Indian seas.

Labourdonnais had a more formidable enemy than the English—Dupleix, the governor of Pondicherry, and supreme chief of all the French factories in India. He was a man of superior, of even great, intellectual parts, but of the lowest moral qualifications for his post. His envy was mean, his ostentation childish, his desire of praise avaricious, his ambition boundless and utterly unprincipled. He could conceive the greatest undertakings, and carry them out with a genius corresponding to that which devised them. No want of political intrigue was too intricate for him to comprehend or disentangle; but where the risk of personal safety was concerned, he was without courage, even if the completion of his dearest designs depended upon its exercise. He had the greatness of mind which belongs to the purely intellectual, but was without magnanimity, for it was never shown towards foes or friends, vanquished or victors, competitors in the same career, or those who achieved success in any other. He was implacable in his resentments, and degraded his country by using her power to gratify them. He was desirous of promoting French glory, but chiefly that France might be under obligation to him: he wished her to be made conspicuous by a light shining from himself. Such was Dupleix, and he never displayed these evil qualities more than in his conduct to Labourdonnais, and his opposition to what that magnanimous man proposed. When Dupleix heard of the success of Labourdonnais, his mind was filled with strangely conflicting emotions. Hatred to the English caused him to receive the intelligence with gratification—envy of Labourdonnais, filled him with mortification. He conceived the idea of so thwarting his own countryman, as to deprive him of his honour, if not of his glory, and of so treating the English, whom Labourdonnais respected, as to humiliate their generous friend and conqueror. Like the heroic Russian general who conquered Kars, Labourdonnais became the friend and protector of the valiant and unfortunate, whom nothing but fate could conquer; but Dupleix determined to frustrate that benevolence, and reverse that policy. Accordingly he refused to recognise the agreement made by the captor of Madras to restore it upon the payment of an indemnity. Labourdonnais was not a man to be trifled with, even by one so eminent and powerful as Dupleix, and he firmly insisted that the powers with which he sailed from France were inde-

pendent of Dupleix, and that he had not only acted in virtue of them, but under the instructions which he received from the French East India Company, which were characterized by moderation and forbearance. He had it in his power, Professor Wilson affirms, according to those instructions, to destroy or to restore, but not to occupy, Madras. The second of the alternatives, where so strong a nation as England was concerned, was the more politic; but independent of that, destruction and cruelty were revolting alike to the principles and feelings of the great Frenchman.

Unable to deter Labourdonnais, and afraid to take any penal measures of a direct nature against him, Dupleix sent instructions of such a kind, as while not directly overruling the admiral's orders, rendered it difficult for the French officers and agents to know which to obey or what to do. By such means the removal of goods and stores were impeded, and the fleet was unable to leave Madras (the worst point in a storm in all the Indian seas) until the monsoons began. On the night of the 13th of October a storm drove the fleet out to sea. Two of the ships were lost, all hands on board perishing except fourteen. The other vessels were tossed about, dismasted, and nearly wrecks. Dupleix refused all assistance. He next insisted that the date of the restoration of the city, which was to have been two days after the storm, should be deferred three months. Labourdonnais and the English with reluctance consented. The admiral could not remain on such a dangerous coast during the stormy weather which had set in, and on his departure the place was of course surrendered to Dupleix. He immediately violated the treaty in a manner as void of shame as of honour.

When Labourdonnais disappeared with his fleet, the nabob, at the head of a native army, attacked the French, resolving to possess himself of the great city for which the Europeans were contending among themselves. When the French fleet sailed, twelve hundred men were left behind, who had been disciplined by Labourdonnais himself after a peculiar manner, to serve on land or sea. This force encountered the numerous army of the nabob, making dreadful havoc by the rapid service of their artillery, and utterly discomfitting "the Moors." Thus the example was not set by Clive at Plassey, as is generally supposed, of a small European force well disciplined defeating vast numbers of the natives; the little army of Labourdonnais at Madras had that honour. This circumstance is noticed by Orme, but has been lost sight of by English writers generally. Dupleix's purpose

of violating the treaty with the English president at Madras, was supported by the public voice at Pondicherry. Mill says (without giving authority for the statement) that Dupleix, by misrepresentation and power, induced or constrained the French merchants to present a petition against the fulfilment of the treaty. With or without such moral support as it was intended to be, Dupleix would have carried out his purpose, and he accordingly executed it with vigour. Madras was plundered; English and natives were not only deprived of their goods, but even of their personal ornaments. The most remorseless Mahratta robber was not less relenting than the French governor. Except some who effected their escape, the English as well as the chief native citizens were brought to Pondicherry as captives, not for the purpose of better security, but to mock them by a public triumphal procession, in which they were made to pass through every indignity that could be heaped upon captives; the French governor took part in the display with vain ostentation, and gave way to malignant and despicable exultation. He triumphed over his enemies and his noble rival after the manner of the most remote and barbarous times, such as had long perished from the usages of all but the weakest and most uncivilized peoples.

Among the captives who were led in that inglorious procession—inglorious to France, to Frenchmen, and above all to the execrable Dupleix—was one youth whom Providence had designed to avenge the indignity put upon himself, his companions, his country, and humanity. That youth was Robert Clive.

The present is a suitable moment in which to state something of the early life of the future conqueror, already passingly brought before the reader. The family of young Clive had been settled in Shropshire, near Market Drayton, on a small estate, for five hundred years, when he was born.\* His father was bred to the bar, married a lady of Manchester named Gaskil, and had a numerous family. Robert was the eldest child, and was born the 29th of September, 1725. Young Robert was one of the many notable persons who have confirmed the saying, "the child's the father of the man." His early boyhood revealed the characteristics of his future manhood. He was a lad of indomitable will, obstinate, tyrannical, having the faculty of attaching to him the enterprising and restless, utterly fearless in danger, even loving it for its own sake, so that the wild and reckless adventures of his boyhood were the theme of

conversation for many a mile around Drayton, and for many a year after "naughty Bob" had disappeared from the scenes of his early exploits. Pugilistic encounters, in which he displayed endurance and courage, and mimic warfare among boys, in which he was always a leader of one of the parties, afforded him much delight. At school, boxing, skating, cricket, racing, and all manner of manly games, and of wild and daring adventures, engaged his affections, to the disparagement of literary progress and education. He was the terror of ushers, his defiant spirit brooked no indignity even when consciously in the wrong, and when a mild discipline might prove successful. One of his teachers, it is alleged, predicted that "wild Bobby" would yet be a great man. Lord Macaulay declares "the general opinion seems to have been, that Robert was a dunce if not a reprobate." His lordship does not add, as he might have done, that the opinion was in neither respect well-founded. In all his wildness there was character; he was deeply susceptible of the friendships schoolboys form; he was grateful, and if not dutiful to his parents, he would yet resent the slightest reflection upon them, and speak of them with reverence, regretting his own undutifulness. He was not addicted to books, but he made more progress at school than he got credit for, and possessed a quick discernment, clear judgment, and comprehensiveness of understanding. These intellectual characteristics were, however, more displayed in action than in preparing the lessons set by his preceptors. The intuition with which schoolboys perceive the merits of their companions, led them to invest young Clive with the attributes of a lad of sense and of a hero; their confidence in his courage and capacity in every boyish freak, equalled that with which his soldiers afterwards surrounded him in the broken battalions of Arcot, or followed him upon the desperate field of Plassey. Undoubtedly his chief excellences were, even in boyhood, prompt judgment in undertaking what was practicable, perseverance in carrying out what he undertook, a courage which no danger, however awful, could daunt, and a presence of mind which never forsook him in peril or difficulty. These qualities were exemplified when he climbed the steeple of Drayton Church, to the terror of the quiet inhabitants of that pretty village, as much as they were when he escaped from Pondicherry, captured, and afterwards defended Arcot, surprised French expeditions, or routed native hosts with a few hundreds of men. His chief fault was tyranny, and that he exhibited when he bullied the shopkeepers of Market Drayton, controlled his schoolfellows, and

\* *The Life of Robert Clive; collected from the family papers communicated by the Earl of Powis.* By Major-General Sir John Malcolm, K.C.B.



raised insurrections against unpopular preceptors, as much as when he arbitrarily dismissed Captain Armstrong of Bombay while serving under him in Bengal, and when he put down speculation and jobbery with a high hand in the factories during the hey-day of his power.

It is often the case in the families of men of original genius, that the last to recognise the peculiar parts of the eccentric, or supposed eccentric, person are his own near relations. This was the case with Clive. They did not perceive the mighty strength of this English Samson, and made no allowance for his weaknesses. Yet, their conduct and feelings towards him hardly justified the language of Lord Macaulay. "It is not strange that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writership in the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or die of fever in Madras." There is no material in the work of Sir John Malcolm which affords fair scope for placing the conduct of the family in such a light in a treatise professing to be a review of Sir John's biography. The elder Clive had so small an estate, and that encumbered, he made so little by his profession, and had so large a family, that he reasonably accepted the appointment for Robert. The ambition of the young man was, however, to become a Manchester merchant. He loved his mother's relatives, the Gaskils, in that city, and desired to enter upon the active species of mercantile pursuits which have always characterised the trade of that great city. Long afterwards, when far away from England, his thoughts often turned to the happy days he had spent in Manchester, whose scenes and associations he longed to revisit. He seemed to entertain the opinion expressed in a recent work, *Young America Abroad*, by Mr. Train, of Boston, United States, "I would rather be a clerk in London or New York, than the head of a large mercantile establishment in Madras." Thither, however, our young adventurer went, reluctantly bidding adieu to the white cliffs of his country, which he loved so well, and for which he eventually dared and did so much.

Voyages round the Cape are still long, compared with the overland route; before steam was known, the time consumed *viâ* the Cape was still greater; and a century ago, the voyage was rendered very tedious indeed by the architecture of the ships employed in the Indian trade, and the nautical habits of the sailors and captains of that age. Clive, however, had a very long voyage, which consumed a whole year. It is probable that it was, on the whole, a well-spent year—one of thought and reading, of meditation upon the future,

and reflection upon the past. The ships made a several months' stay on the coast of the Brazils, and there Clive studied the Portuguese language, which was always an advantage to him in his Indian career, the traces of the Portuguese being then still fresh upon the shores of the peninsula. Arrived in Madras, he was filled with disgust. He neither liked the place, the situation, nor the people. His pay was inadequate, and he soon incurred debts which harassed his mind. He was haughty, and, like many other adventurers, bold, competent, and self-relying; yet he was shy, and consequently made few acquaintances: he was miserably lodged, home-sick, and unhappy. With all his intrepidity, like Nelson, he was a delicate youth—at all events, out of his own climate; and he suffered greatly from the exhausting heats of all low situations in Southern India. It was not, Sir John Malcolm affirms, until he was several months in Madras that he formed an acquaintance with any family which a youth of his early associations and respectability could visit. He pined for his loved England, and for any one of the paths of honour and enterprise her industry and ambition provided within her own shores. He thus wrote to his relatives:—"I have not enjoyed one happy day since I left my native country. I must confess, at intervals when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner . . . . If I should be so blest as to visit again my own country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented in one view." Lord Macaulay, in his review of General Malcolm's memoir, says, of these passages, "He expressed his feelings softer and more pensive than we should have expected either from the waywardness of his boyhood or from the inflexible sternness of his later years." It is surprising that the great critic should not have perceived, in Sir John Malcolm's records of the youth of his hero, sufficient evidence of a tender and even a plaintive spirit, which lived within him in spite of all his rougher attributes, as a mild bright star beaming through the darkness and turbulence of a storm. His lordship, in vindicating the nobler attributes of Clive against his calumniators, points out the benignant and affectionate aspects of his disposition, which appear so touchingly amidst even "the inflexible sternness of his later years." While neglected in Madras, he met with some encouragement from the president, who threw open to him his library, which was well stocked with the best books of the day. There Clive studied with assiduity, and, having had the foundation of a

good education, he was able to make available easily the information to be gathered amongst the president's books. He thus emerged into public life neither ignorant of books nor men, and having passed through long periods, in proportion to his years, necessitating reflection by the circumstances of retirement in which he was placed. It does not appear that military reading formed part of his studies: he had, at that time, rather cultivated commercial tastes and ambition; but, as almost every English boy loves stories of military enterprise, he would be likely, from national taste as well as from constitutional sympathy with heroic adventure, to take up books recording the valorous deeds of his loved ancestral England. The singular intelligence on all military subjects shown by him at once, when emergency called for it, strengthens the probability that military history and tactics formed part of his studies. While he lived as a writer in Madras, his conduct was not very dissimilar to that of his boyhood: he was haughty to his superiors, and, without being actually insubordinate, was so wilful as to endanger his situation. It would appear that much of what was strange and wayward, and even bold, in his behaviour arose from disease. From his early youth or childhood, some morbid affliction, perhaps an affection of the brain, which influenced his emotions without obscuring his fine intellect, attended him; and, when lonely and apparently forsaken in Madras, he twice attempted suicide. The instrument used on each of these occasions was a pistol, which both times missed fire when the barrel was pointed to his head. Having convinced himself, on the latter occasion, that the pistol was well loaded, he received the impression that Providence or destiny had designed him for some important purpose, as his life was so miraculously preserved. Such was the state of mind of this young man when borne a prisoner by the perfidious Dupleix to Pondicherry, and there paraded about for the sport of a people who were little better than their then infamous governor. It is easy to conceive how the high spirit of Clive chafed under these indignities; but his resolute will and fertile genius soon found an opportunity to assert themselves: he assumed the disguise of a Mussulman, left the town by night, and reached the English fortress of St. David in safety. Well had it been for Dupleix and for France that the wanderer who so well affected the mien and garb of Islam had been fettered in Pondicherry, or that Labourdonnais' clemency and honour had prevailed, and left the young clerk in "Writers' Buildings," at Madras, until commercial success, dismissal, or suicide

had prevented him from interfering in the field of war with the ambition of the governor of Pondicherry, and the genius of French conquest.

When Clive arrived at St. David's, he, of course, found only occasional employment for his pen; he was in distress, utterly penniless. The indignation of the garrison against the French was great, and every man thought of the sword. Clive requested an appointment as ensign in the company's service, and his desire was granted. Thus began his military career, and, like another great hero, whose deeds in India afterwards won for him immortal renown—the Duke of Wellington—Clive began the routine of his profession by attention to the minutest things, acquiring the detail of discipline, and the rules of war, and forming his soldiers upon his own ideal model of drill and duty. Before he entered the service he gave proof of his audacious courage by a protracted and desperate duel with a military ruffian, whose insults had cowed the civilians at the fort, but which were no sooner directed to Clive than the vaunting desperado was made to feel that he had provoked a man of lofty and unconquerable spirit. When he entered the company's military service he was twenty-one years of age. In this position he must at present remain in our narrative, until other events have passed, and new transactions bring him once more upon the stage of action.

Fort St. David was situated only twelve miles south of Pondicherry, and was one of the most important places held by the company in India. Beside the fort—a comprehensive phrase, which expressed, not only the fortifications and barracks, but the English town—there was a large native town called Cuddalore, inhabited by native merchants and bankers; there were also several large villages, and a country territory more extensive than that owned by the company at Madras. Cuddalore was an imposing and important place. Three sides of the town were towards the land, and were defended by walls and bastions; the fourth side was open to the sea, but a river flowed between it and a high sand-bank, by which the river was separated from the ocean. The agents at Fort St. David took upon themselves the government of English interests along the Coromandel coast, performing the functions of the late presidency of Madras.

Dupleix resolved to reduce Fort St. David, and thereby conquer the whole coast of Coromandel. On the 19th of December, a force consisting of about one thousand nine hundred men, exclusive of officers, marched out from Pondicherry against the English settlement.

About two hundred of this little army were Caffres from Madagascar, trained by Labourdonnais; the rest were nearly all Europeans, but a few were sepoys, and a troop of cavalry was included in the full muster. Fortunately many of the English and loyal natives of Madras fled thence to St. David's, when they perceived that Dupleix had resolved to violate the treaty of Labourdonnais; these swelled the numbers able to defend the fort to more than three hundred men; one hundred, however, were topasses. The English hired two thousand natives, a dismal looking brigade, armed with spears and shields, swords and matchlocks, bows and arrows; these men were called "peons." To these peons muskets were distributed, which, with the matchlocks already possessed by them, changed the promiscuous and comparatively harmless armament into one of some unity and efficiency. These natives were placed upon the walls and bastions of Cuddalore; the English and topasses occupied Fort St. David. The English also applied for assistance to the nabob, who, anxious to avenge his signal defeat by the French at Madras, promised an "army," if the English would bear half the expense. This the British gladly accepted. The French arrived, after a deliberate march, before the fort, and took up an advantageous position, which they had no sooner done, than the nabob's army, numbering ten thousand men, appeared in sight. The French retreated, pursued by the combined forces, and losing one hundred and thirty-two Frenchmen, killed and wounded, of whom, however, only twelve were slain. After that discomfiture, Dupleix, persevering and sanguine, and relying much upon his diplomatic address with the native powers, made overtures of a friendly nature to the nabob, and while thus amusing him, without waiting for any formal arrangement of friendship, he resolved to attack the English by sea. His plan involved a surprise upon the Cuddalore portion of the defences. The scheme was well laid. The flotilla set out, every man confident of success; but a storm arose, and compelled the boats to put back. Having failed in conciliating the nabob, Dupleix sent troops into his territory, hoping thus to keep the army of his highness occupied in defensive movements, while another French force attacked Cuddalore. In accomplishing the first part of this plan Dupleix's troops committed scandalous excesses, which infuriated the nabob against the French nation, towards which his previous resentment was strong. At this juncture Dupleix received a great accession of strength. After the storm which scattered the ships of Labourdonnais, four of the finest of them made for

Acheen to refit; having accomplished that object, they returned. The nabob was easily persuaded that the reinforcements were much larger, and with that destitution of honour so characteristic of the natives of India, he changed sides and became the ally of the French. This circumstance revived the hopes of Dupleix, who described himself as apprehensive of the nabob's army blockading Pondicherry by land, and an English fleet arriving in time to blockade it by sea. Accordingly, on the 13th of March, 1747, a French force approached St. David's. The English auxiliaries skirmished and fell back; the French forced the passage of the river, and took up the position it had occupied when, on the previous occasion, the approach of the nabob's army compelled a retreat. At this juncture the fugitive English fleet was descried making for the roads. The French retreated, and, according to Orme, the retreat was almost a flight. Dupleix, fearing that his ships would be captured, ordered them from Pondicherry to Goa. Thence they continued their flight to the Mauritius, where they found three other royal ships, and the whole prepared to strengthen themselves for operations against the fleet which had arrived to the aid of the English.

The English naval reinforcement consisted of five men-of-war, under Admiral Griffin, and the squadron which had so ingloriously evaded Labourdonnais. Admiral Griffin having, as senior officer, superseded Captain Peyton, who previously held command of the squadron already in those seas, at once urged a course of activity. Having raised the siege of St. David's, he proposed carrying the war into the ports of the enemy, and expressed his intention to organize an expedition against Pondicherry itself. The land forces of the garrison of St. David's were at the same time augmented by reinforcements from England, composed of a few soldiers who came out with Admiral Griffin, a detachment of four hundred sepoys, sent from Tellicherry, and from Bombay one hundred European soldiers, two hundred topasses, and one hundred sepoys. Thus the sepoys trained in Western India were coming into service, although no hope was then entertained that they would ever become so well disciplined, or so extensively employed as was afterwards the case in the company's history. During the remainder of the year one hundred and fifty English soldiers arrived in different detachments, giving strength to the garrison such as it had never before possessed. At the opening of the year 1748, Major Lawrence arrived with the commission of commander-in-chief of the company's forces in India.

Nothing was done by Admiral Griffin against Pondicherry, notwithstanding his demonstrations of activity. He remained in the road of St. David's and sent out his lighter ships as scouts to watch the coast. The French fleet at the Mauritius received orders from Dupleix to convey reinforcements and money to Madras, avoiding an action with the English, but risking it in order to accomplish the object.

In the month of June the French fleet approached St. David's, as if to attack Admiral Griffin, but skilfully evaded doing so, made for Madras, landed the reinforcements, and again fled to Mauritius. Griffin set sail in fruitless search of them. Professor Wilson, in one of his notes to Mill, gives the following account of the way in which the admiral's conduct was subsequently arraigned in England, and his own explanation:—"Admiral Griffin, on his return to England, was brought to a court-martial and suspended the service, for negligence in not having stood out to sea upon first receiving information of the enemy's approach; by doing which, it was argued, he might have frustrated the object of the French squadron, if not have brought them to action. He published an appeal against the sentence, grounding his defence upon his having missed the land-wind on the day before the squadron was in sight, in necessary preparations to strengthen his own ships for an encounter with what his information represented as a superior force, by which he expected to be attacked." While Griffin was in pursuit of the French fleet, Dupleix, ever active, vigilant, and exploitful, resolved to attack St. David's before the admiral could beat back through the monsoon. He accordingly sent a fresh expedition against Cuddalore. French writers agree in awarding praise to the gallant and skilful manner in which Major Lawrence conducted the defence. He made a feint of abandoning the garrison, and the French were thus seduced to approach the walls rather tumultuously; but while applying the scaling ladders Lawrence opened a destructive fire of cannon and musketry, which caused havoc and dismay; the French throwing away their arms in precipitate flight. Lawrence was not in a condition to pursue them into the plain; he contented himself by making fresh dispositions against renewed attack.

The government of England resolved to throw forth more power upon the eastern theatre of the war. The means adopted to retrieve the losses incurred in India are thus described by an eminent historian:—"Nine ships of the public navy, one of seventy-four, one of sixty-four, two of sixty, two of fifty, one of twenty guns, a sloop of fourteen, a

bomb-ketch with her tender, and an hospital-ship, commanded by Admiral Boscawen; and eleven ships of the company, carrying stores and troops to the amount of 1400 men, set sail from England towards the end of the year 1747. They had instructions to capture the island of Mauritius in their way; as a place of great importance to the enterprises of the French in India. But the leaders of the expedition, after examining the coast, and observing the means of defence, were deterred, by the loss of time which the enterprise would occasion. On the 9th of August they arrived at Fort St. David, when the squadron, joined to that under Griffin, formed the largest European force that any one power had yet possessed in India."

Dupleix had improved the interval with his usual foresight and indefatigable zeal. He had laid in stores of all kind in Pondicherry and Madras; the fleet from Mauritius had already landed there a large supply of silver when with the reinforcements it had evaded Griffin. Dupleix, in his own account of his feeling at the time, written years afterwards, stated that he knew the nabob would desert him as soon as he saw the English armaments, and he resolved to make the best use of an alliance which was certain so soon to terminate.\* The English at Fort St. David were urgent for active measures against Pondicherry, and they mustered a considerable body of troops which, with the fleet under Admiral Boscawen, it was believed must speedily reduce it.

Little more than two miles south-west of Pondicherry there was a fortified town called Ariancopang, to which the French of Pondicherry could retire if hard pressed there. It was deemed desirable to capture this subsidiary place, and little opposition was expected. The English had no means of obtaining plans of the fortifications, and they were wholly without information as to the resources of the garrison. An assault was ordered, and was repulsed in such a manner as was not flattering to the spirit of the sepoys and topasses in the British service, and who immediately formed a repugnance to the expedition. Batteries were erected, but the guns of the enemy were served with rapidity, precision, and valour. The French, so justly celebrated in war for their skilful defence of fortified places, highly deserved such reputation in this instance. Their sallies were conducted with daring valour, superior enterprise, and military knowledge. On the occasion of a desperate and successful sortie, the English commander-in-chief was borne away from the trenches in spite of the exertions of

\* *Mémoire pour Dupleix.*

his soldiers. At last, what the valour and wisdom of this small body of Frenchmen had so well preserved was lost by accident—the powder magazine exploded. The garrison immediately blew up the defences, and retired to Pondicherry, strengthening the force which Dupleix there possessed. Although the approaching season, when the rains would render all warlike operations impossible, demanded haste, the English, with that fatal want of promptitude by which they have so often suffered in war, tarried five days repairing the fortifications, instead of leaving the task to the small garrison intended for its occupation. They then advanced to Pondicherry. When before that renowned place they continued their slow tactics, and their measures were as timid as dilatory. The trenches were opened at nearly twice the usual distance, although there was nothing in the position of the place to require such a departure from the custom of sieges then recognised. When the trenches were formed, after much delay, it was found that they were so far off, the batteries could make no impression on the town. The cannons and mortars of the fleet were nearly useless, and in truth, although Dupleix himself was frightened, the besieged laughed their besiegers to scorn. The intrenchments were carried slowly, cautiously, and awkwardly, to within eight hundred yards of the wall, and then it was found that a morass obstructed the workmen. It was at the same time discovered that at another side of the town from which no approaches were made, the works might have been carried to the foot of the glacis. The batteries erected on the edge of the morass were silenced by the superior cannonade of the enemy.

A whole month had now been wasted, and nothing had occurred in the result of so much labour but disgrace. A council of war was called, which wisely determined to abandon the siege, for the English were incapable of conducting it; their gunners were no match for the French, and the stormy season was at hand, when the ships would be driven away, wreck and loss of life occurring, as in the case of the fleet of Labourdonnais.

When the English retired, Dupleix made much noise about his exploits, writing to France, to the Great Mogul, and to all the

petty princes far and near, declaring that few victories were ever obtained where the disproportion of force was so great. All Pondicherry was in transports; their joy was brilliant as a Bengal light. Probably had the gallant Lawrence not been captured, there would have been cause for mourning. The result upon the interests of France was greatly to enhance them; upon those of England they were depressing. So speedily do Eastern peoples forget the effects of achievements gone by, that all the prestige of English valour passed away, and they were once more looked upon by the natives as essentially unwarlike, although personally brave,—as having vast resources, but not knowing how to make use of them.

Matters were in this condition when news arrived, in November, 1748, of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which put an end to the war, and placed the two parties in India *in statu quo ante bellum*. The English restored their late dearly-bought conquest, and received possession of Madras. Dupleix did all in his power to keep up the old spirit of irritation: he gave out that the French gave the English back Madras to show their charity and to prove that the cause of quarrel did not lie with him. This appeared to the natives as *prima facie* true, and they wondered at the magnanimity and generosity of Dupleix. The English he taunted with their imbecility, reminding them that, but for events in Europe, he would have driven them out of India. Their operations by sea he derided as much as those by land, and the natives were generally of his opinion. Still somehow, by degrees, an impression gained way among the Indian chiefs that the English had an irresistible power somewhere, that, however incompetent to carry on wars in India, yet their proceedings elsewhere influenced Indian affairs so signally that no other European power made eventually successful war upon them. These impressions were fluctuating, as events raised one party or the other before the observers, whose keen eyes were ever directed to any change in the relative power of the different European interests on the peninsula.

Such were the facts and results of this brief war, which, however, only proved to be the preliminary of future conflict, as the first shock of the earthquake is often but the portent of a coming desolation.

CHAPTER LXIX.

ENGLISH CONQUEST OF THE CARNATIC—WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE RESUMED—  
CONTINUATION OF THE STRUGGLE TO THE RETURN OF CLIVE TO ENGLAND.

THE treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle did not long secure peace between the English and French in India. From the first, it was felt to be a hollow truce. Mr. Mill, always severe upon his countrymen, attributes to them the first act of indirect hostility in their armed interference at Tanjore; but this is not just, for it was notorious that Dupleix was enraged by the peace, and made no secret of his intentions to drive the English out of India, to possess himself of the whole Carnatic,\* and to found a French dominion in Southern India. The restoration of Madras was made with the worst possible grace, and the French seldom met the English without predicting that the time was at hand when the governor of Pondicherry would rule the Deccan. The English were prevented from settling down into peaceful habits of trade by the menacing position and vaunting language of Dupleix. It was impossible for the English, after the experience of the late war, to disband their native forces and send home their European troops, while the French president retained his, sedulously strengthened his positions, as if preparing for war, and while yet surrendering Madras, and conforming to the terms of the recent peace, was opening new intrigues with the native chiefs of the same character as those which led to so much conflict during so many years. The aim of this ambitious and mischievous man was the same after the peace as during the war: his thirst for conquest and glory was not slaked; he still hoped, by the same means as he had already used, to achieve the end he had so long contemplated. The English determined to foster alliances, and to strengthen their own position.

The first event which broke the calm on the eastern shores of the peninsula after peace was proclaimed was an alliance with Syajee† or Sahujee, prince of Tanjore, on the part of the English. This prince had been deposed by his own brother, a common incident of Indian history. He invoked the aid of the English, and, in return, offered to them the fortress and district of Devi-Cotah, well placed on the banks of the Colaroone. As soon as it was known at Colaroone that an English expe-

dition was preparing at Tanjore, Dupleix affected great horror of the ambitious projects of the English. They took means indirectly to inform him that the place they desired to obtain was of value for trading purposes only, and they were not about to wrest it from its legitimate sovereign, but to conquer it, as his ally. Dupleix pretended that it was necessary for him to seek a counterpoise to English power in another direction, in consequence of this movement, whereas he had secretly been planning the measures already, which he represented as forced upon him by English ambition.

In April, 1749, the Rajah of Tanjore set out from Fort St. David's, accompanied by an English force consisting of four hundred and thirty Europeans and one thousand sepoys. The late war had brought this latter description of force into use as an important arm of Indo-European armies. The artillery attending this brigade was only eight small pieces, four of which were mortars: there was, however, a battering-train sent by sea. The land force was under the command of Captain Cope.\*

After a march of ten miles, the British arrived before Devi-Cotah, meeting no regular force, but annoyed by a guerilla warfare throughout the march. This expedition was managed still worse than the siege of Pondicherry, in the war so lately concluded. No communications were kept up with the fleet, on board of which was the heavy ordnance, and although only four miles distant, the army was ignorant of its position. Several shells were thrown at the town from a distance which rendered them harmless. The besiegers retreated, and returned to St. David's after as bootless an expedition as ever an army undertook.

The shame of this affair so affected the restored English government of Madras, that they determined upon another expedition, which was sent under Major Lawrence by sea, Admiral Boscawen commanding the flotilla. Mr. Mill thus noticed the motives and feelings prevailing at Madras, in ordering the new attempt upon the coveted prize:—"They exaggerated the value of Devi-Cotah; situated in the most fertile spot on the coast of Coromandel; and standing on the river Colaroone, the channel of which, within the bar, was capable of receiving ships of the largest burden, while there was not a port from Masulipatam to Cape Comorin, which could receive one of three hundred tons: it

\* The reader, by turning to the geographical portion of this work, will find much assistance in tracing the course of the contending armies, an assistance without which any account of these conquests must be scarcely intelligible.

† Mill, Murray, and others call him Subajee.

\* Mill erroneously assigns it to Major Lawrence.

was true the mouth of the river was obstructed by sand; but if that could be removed, the possession would be invaluable."

The troops were conducted to the place of debarkation, from whence the walls of the fortifications were battered, until a breach was made; but the river flowed between the walls and the English, and the passage was so commanded from the walls and woods, that unless a large portion of the force could be pushed over at once, the hope of success was small. There were, however, no means for the accomplishment of such an object, and the second expedition was in danger of failing like the first, when a ship-carpenter, named Moore, devised a raft by which four hundred soldiers were passed over at once. When the raft was formed, a new difficulty presented itself, it could not be moved across. Moore bravely volunteered to swim the river, bearing a rope which, fastened to the opposite side, would enable the raft to be pulled across. To facilitate the accomplishment of this project, a heavy fire was opened which compelled the enemy to retire some distance; the brave fellow swam the flood, and executed his task during the night. The troops crossed, the trench was mounted, and the place was stormed. This was, however, not easily performed, and through the rash conduct of Clive, the future hero of India, many valuable lives were lost. He led the storming party. At the head of some Europeans, followed by seven hundred sepoys, he showed the most daring intrepidity, but advancing too fiercely he was separated from his men, who, being without orders, were thrown into confusion, and nearly all cut to pieces. Clive escaped unhurt, after passing through the most imminent dangers.

Major Lawrence, whom Lord Macaulay describes simply as a sensible man, devoid of the attributes of a great soldier, acted at Devicotah, as well as in his other enterprises, in a manner worthy of higher commendation from the great reviewer. He led his whole force across, and, with a skill in which Clive was at that time deficient, he carried the place, almost without loss. The reigning rajah offered to concede to the English the fort and the surrounding territory, if they would abandon the cause of his brother, in whose name they made war. To the disgrace of the British they accepted the overture. Mill says that but for Admiral Boscawen, they would have surrendered him into the hands of the actual rajah. Orme, however, gives a totally different account of the whole transaction. The only redeeming feature in the affair was, that a small allowance for the deposed rajah was exacted by the victors.

The conduct of the English was such that while the French had no pretence to complain of it, both the rajahs had. The English had been the ally of the man against whom they had made war for a bribe which they coveted, and when they found him ready to bestow as much, they basely deserted the cause of the man on whose behalf they took up the enterprise. The only apology for their conduct in that part of their policy was, that his representation of the public feeling of the people of his lost dominion was false, and its subjugation would have involved much cost and loss of men. The errors, politically and morally, into which the English fell in their conduct with the rival nabobs of Tanjore were not such as they had often incurred previously, but were peculiar to the occasion. They were so anxious to make a powerful counterpoise to the French, that honour and honesty were forgotten; "they stuck at nothing," as a writer more expressive than elegant remarked. The English at first made mistakes in policy, chiefly from applying the principles of international law known and recognised in Europe, to people who were ignorant of those principles, and who could see no propriety or justice in their application when those laws were pleaded or proposed as bases of treaty, grounds of amity, or reasons for redress. But in the short and inglorious war with Tanjore, the conduct of the English was truly oriental, and, on the whole, suffered by comparison, morally, with the policy of the reigning rajah. A time had now arrived when it was very difficult for any European nations to conduct relations with the natives, on any principles regarded as right and necessary in Europe, although all made a show of doing so. "The situation of India was such that scarcely any aggression could be such without a pretext in old laws or recent practice. All rights were in a state of utter uncertainty; and the Europeans who took part in the disputes of the natives confounded the confusion, by applying to Asiatic politics the public law of the west, and analogies drawn from the feudal system. If it were convenient to treat a nabob as an independent prince there was an excellent plea for doing so,—he was independent, in fact. If it were convenient to treat him as a mere deputy of the court of Delhi, there was no difficulty,—for he was so in theory. If it was convenient to treat his office as an hereditary dignity, or as a dignity held during life only, or as a dignity held during the pleasure of the great Mogul, arguments and precedents might be found for every one of these views. The party who had the heir of Baber in their hands, represented him as the undoubted,

legitimate, the absolute sovereign, whom all subordinate authorities were bound to obey. The party against whom his name was used did not want plausible pretexts for maintaining that the empire was in fact dissolved, and that though it might be decent to treat the Mogul with respect, as a venerable relic of an order of things which had passed away, it was absurd to regard him as the real master of Hindostan."\*

The English had begun to understand this state of things. What Lord Macaulay describes as the views of Dupleix may be said of his rivals and enemies at this time, and explains the readiness with which in Tanjore the English espoused the cause of one brother against another in pretension to the rajahlik. "The most easy and convenient way in which an European adventurer could exercise sovereignty in India, was to govern the motions, and to speak through the mouth, of some glittering puppet, dignified by the title of nabob or nizam."† When once the English adopted this view of Indian policy, they practised it with a success of which their Tanjore escapade gave no promise.

In the transactions thus recorded, Clive was a very prominent actor. He had only begun his military career when tidings of peace between England and France having arrived, the conflicts in India were for a time stopped, and Madras being restored, Clive retired from his temporary soldiering to resume his duties in "Writers' Buildings." He could use both sword and pen, but the sword best became him. Although historians say little of him in connection with the siege of Pondicherry—as indeed the records of English historians are altogether meagre concerning that event—yet Clive greatly distinguished himself. His distinction appears, however, not to have been for skill, but for courage. The same was the case in the war with the Rajah of Tanjore, for which he volunteered as lieutenant from his desk at Madras. Both before Pondicherry and in Tanjore, he was remarkable for the influence he gained over the sepoy, the excellent discipline to which he brought them, and the readiness with which they followed him into danger, where he constantly and recklessly placed himself. He understood the sepoy better than any other man at that time in India; he had a remarkable capacity for discerning their feelings, and a knack of winning their confidence; as he said afterwards, "I twined my laurels round the prejudices of

the natives." It does not appear that he had analyzed the springs of those prejudices, or penetrated the philosophy of the native religions; but as conscience did not prevent him accommodating himself to their superstitions, there was no barrier between him and them, such as usually exists where an officer is scrupulous in religious matters. A friend of his, named Hallyburton, who probably set Clive the example of disciplining the natives, and who possessed great talent as a regimental officer, was shot dead by one of his own sepoy, to whose prejudices he had given unconscious offence. This produced a deep impression on the sensitive heart of Clive, and seems to have impressed him with the necessity of going any and every length with the peculiarities of the native mind. It was Clive's policy from the beginning to put much confidence in such native officers as appeared to him to possess military talents, and through them he exercised more influence over the natives than by direct intercourse with them. All, however, whether officers or soldiers, adored him for his heroism, and they conceived at once a pride in following a leader who always chose the path of peril, and assumed the most imminently dangerous position for himself. After the short war with Tanjore, Clive again returned to his desk, and probably would have remained in pursuit of commerce, notwithstanding his military taste and his recent daring exploits, if new events had not called him again to arms. Lord Macaulay at once describes the condition at this time of the man, and the empire whose fortunes he was destined to influence so signally, in a single paragraph:—"While he was wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of England attained a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French crowns; but there arose between the English and French companies trading to the East a war most eventful and important, a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane."

It is true that the ensuing war was *in its ultimate results* for the possession of all those regions over which Tamerlane once rode upon the tide of conquest; but the immediate conflict was for *ascendancy* only in a single province of the many territories which made up the mighty empire of the sovereigns of Hindostan. His lordship is virtually correct in describing the war as between the two European companies, although in fact, Dupleix, in spite of his company, or by misrepresentations designedly made, so far as he had their consent, strode over the land in the

\* *Critical and Historical Essays; contributed to the Edinburgh Review.* By Thomas Babington Macaulay. *Essay on Clive.*

† *Ibid.*



love of conquest, with the morbid desire for military glory peculiar to a Frenchman, and with all the animosity prevalent in those days in the minds of the French towards England.

The unfortunate expedition of the English to Tanjore strengthened the influence of Dupleix with the native princes, and enabled him, with some show of reason, to assure the French company that the English were bent upon aggrandizement, in order to counteract which it was necessary for him to make extensive native alliances, to weaken the power and influence of native rulers friendly to the English, and, should occasion arise, to assert the supremacy of the French nation by arms. The French company were apprehensive of the policy of Dupleix and the power of England. They desired to enrich themselves by trade, and by territorial resources, acquired gradually and as peacefully as possible. They wished by trick and treaty to get hold of the lands which lay nearest to their factories, but dreaded warlike expenses, and protested that above all cares committed to Dupleix, stood the responsibility of breaking peace with the powerful English. The government of France sympathised with the company, with which (as was shown in a previous chapter) it was identified in a manner more closely than the English, or any other European government, was with the Eastern trading company which they respectively supported. The French king knew that however slow to arm the English were as a nation, they were still slower in laying down their arms when once taken up in war; and his majesty, through the company, enforced a policy of peace with the English, but gradual and safe encroachment upon the natives. Dupleix, however, continued in a subtle and ingenious manner to turn all his instructions from home to his own purposes, and while affecting to be very amenable to his government and the French company, to act independently, and carry on step by step his projects for ousting the English, and becoming lord of Southern India.

The time at length arrived for the new era of conflict, and, for the English, of strangely mingled reverses and victories, until their chequered fortunes assumed the character of a great and deeply interesting romance, made actual by the interposition of all-powerful destinies. Lord Macaulay describes the occasion of the approaching struggles, and the policy which availed itself of such occasion, in the following manner:—"In the year 1748 died one of the most powerful of the new masters of India, Nizam-ool-Moolk, viceroy of the Deccan. His authority descended to his

son, Nazir Jung. Of the provinces subject to this high functionary, the Carnatic was the richest and the most extensive. It was governed by an ancient nabob, whose name the English corrupted into Anaverdy Khan. But there were pretenders to the government both of the viceroyalty and of the subordinate province. Mirzapha Jung, grandson of Nizam-ool-Moolk, appeared as the competitor of Nazir Jung; Chunda Sahib, son-in-law of a former nabob of the Carnatic, disputed the title of Anaverdy Khan. In the unsettled state of law in India, it was easy for both Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib to make out a claim of right. In a society altogether disorganized, they had no difficulty in finding greedy adventurers to follow their standards. They united their interests, invaded the Carnatic, and applied for assistance to the French, whose fame had been raised by their success against the English in their recent war on the coast of Coromandel. Nothing could have happened more pleasing to the subtle and ambitious Dupleix. To make a nabob of the Carnatic, to make a viceroy of the Deccan, and to rule under their names the whole of Southern India, this was indeed an attractive prospect. He allied himself with the pretenders, and sent four hundred French soldiers, and two thousand sepoys\* disciplined after the European fashion, to the assistance of the confederates. A battle was fought; the French distinguished themselves greatly. Anaverdy Khan was defeated and slain. His son, Mohammed Ali, who was afterwards well known in England as the nabob of Arcot, and who owes to the eloquence of Burke a most unenviable immortality, fled with a scanty remnant of his army to Trichinopoly, and the conquerors became at once masters of almost every part of the Carnatic."

It is not necessary in this history to trace the conflicts which followed. The fortunes of the various native princes concerned changed rapidly as the scenes in a diorama, but amidst all these changes the genius of Dupleix triumphed, and wherever the French fought they maintained the reputation for gallantry which their nation had acquired throughout the world. In the various tests to which their bravery was put, their officers did not particularly distinguish themselves, and their chief leaders were sometimes incompetent. Dupleix himself avoided all exposure to danger, alleging that the smoke and noise of battle were unfavourable to his political

\* This is an exaggeration of the number of sepoys by several hundreds, but there was a Caffre force which had landed at Poudicherry attached to the expedition, which brought the number of black troops up to one thousand nine hundred.

speculations. He, however, provided scope for the courage of his countrymen, if not ambitious of displaying his own.

Nazir Jung was slain by a chief who had, with his followers, betrayed their ruler. The Deccan fell into the hands of Mirzapha Jung. The conquerors entered Pondicherry in triumph. They were received with demonstrations of joy and honour unbounded. Not only did the cannon thunder their welcome as became such scenes and such victories, but the sacred name of religion and of its Author were invoked as sanctioning the intrigue and cruelty by which the results were brought about; public thanksgivings were observed in the churches, and even the Portuguese could not celebrate a *Te Deum* after some sanguinary atrocity more heartily than the French of Pondicherry did on this great occasion. It was in the capital of French India that the new nizam was installed in his grand office of viceroy or soubahdar of the Deccan, a circumstance not only flattering to the vanity of Dupleix, but calculated to cement his power and increase the prestige of France. In the public procession, Dupleix sat in the same palanquin with the soubahdar, and took precedence of all the nabobs, rajahs, and petty princes who came in the train of the great viceroy. The French governor was declared governor of southern India, from Cape Comorin to the Kistna river, and was appointed to the command of seven thousand cavalry, one of the highest honours conferred by a native prince. The French mint was proclaimed as exclusively authorised to coin money for circulation in the Carnatic. Dupleix amassed riches. The money and jewels which he received as *presents*, were estimated at more than a quarter of a million sterling in value. The revenues he derived personally could not be computed, as there were few sources of revenue open to the viceroy in which he had not some part.

The nizam's death, which occurred soon after his elevation, afforded an opportunity to Dupleix still further to enhance his authority, by nominating another prince to the viceregal throne. The influence of the European adventurer became boundless, and he used his influence arbitrarily, arrogantly, and harshly. Some of his acts were unnecessarily and wantonly vain-glorious, others were political though boastful. Amongst the most signal displays of his power and love of glory, was the erection of a pillar where he had effected the triumph of Mirzapha over Nazir Jung. The four sides of this column bore, in four different languages, an inscription proclaiming his triumph. Around the spot where this monument of his achievements stood, a considerable town

was built, to which he gave the name of Dupleix Fatchabad, which means "the town of Dupleix's victory."

The English sent a few troops under Major Lawrence to thwart or check the progress of the French, but ostensibly to resist the invaders of the legitimate viceroy and nabob, whom they continued to recognise. It was one of the chief modes of displaying hostility on the part of the two rival European powers to take opposite sides in all disputed successions, and as there was nearly always a disputed succession somewhere in the neighbourhood of their settlements, there was of consequence a perpetual contravention by intrigue, or military succour supplied to the native parties in contention. Major Lawrence was so disgusted with his allies that he abandoned them as impracticable; the French more than once were obliged to leave their friends on the same grounds, but the pertinacious and untiring policy of Dupleix, together with his tact and finesse, enabled him to restore amity between his soldiers and their allies. The retirement for a time from India of the brave and indefatigable Major Lawrence facilitated the designs of Dupleix, and rendered his military ascendancy more complete; for Lawrence was the only man in India capable of assuming a large command, although he was indifferently supported, and poorly rewarded both by the authorities in Madras and London. Clive had not gathered military experience, but in him was genius adequate to the great task of retrieving all that was lost, and asserting for his country a power and influence in India which the wildest dreams of her most imaginative sons never conceived.

The desperate affairs of Mohammed Ali at last demanded some efforts on the part of the English different from the feeble demonstrations they had previously made. Although nabob of the Carnatic, his own patrimonial territory was small, and Trichinopoly, its chief stronghold, was in daily danger of falling before the siege of the rival nabob, and the French. Upon the districts of Tanjore and Trichinopoly both competitors had fixed their attention as the centres of their respective influences and claims of authority and power. The accounts given by writers on Indian affairs of the pretensions and rights of the competing nabobs, are very contradictory. Mill professes to rest his account upon Orme, but his statements of Orme's opinions do not agree with that writers own representations of the views he held; and it is scarcely of sufficient importance to the general English reader to analyze the evidence of the comparative claims of Mohammed Ali, and Chunda

Sahib, and of the right of either to be independent of the Mogul, even if it were practicable to unravel so intricate a skein of treachery and intrigue. Dr. Wilson says :— "The Hindoo princes of Tanjore and Trichinopoly had never been subdued by the Mogul, and although at times compelled to purchase the forbearance of the Mohammedan states of Bejapore or Golconda, they had preserved their independence from a remote date. The expulsion of their native princes was owing to domestic dissensions, which transferred Tanjore to a Mahratta ruler, and gave Trichinopoly to a Mohammedan. The latter was a relic of the Hindoo kingdom of Madura, and according to original authorities, Chunda Sahib obtained possession of it, not under the circumstances described by the European writers, who were avowedly ill-informed of the real merits of the case, but by an act of treachery to his ally Minakshi Amman, the reigning queen, whose adopted son he had zealously defended against a competitor for the principality—grateful for his support, and confiding in his friendship, the queen gave him free access to the citadel, and he abused her confidence by making himself treacherously master of the fortress."\*

To reduce Trichinopoly was now the work of Chunda Sahib, and the prince offered to resign on terms to the French. The English interposed and insisted that, instead of this arrangement, Chunda Sahib should be recognised as nabob of the Carnatic, Mohammed Ali retaining Trichinopoly. The French answered with insolent contempt; and the tardy English, whose minds seemed full of confusion at the magnitude of the events passing around them, made some determination to resist. The allied army of Chunda Sahib and the French advanced to Arcot, contrary to the advice of Dupleix, who recommended the nabob to march upon Trichinopoly itself, while yet the hesitating English were dubious what course to pursue. An English force, under Captain Gingsens, left Fort St. David to intercept, or at all events harass, the enemy. The sahib had encamped his forces on the great road between Trichinopoly and Arcot, when the English came up with him, and made dispositions for battle. The chief force of the British was sepoys, and there was also a body of Caffres, deserters from the French, and from the Dutch, who also had employed this description of soldiers. Some of these were natives of Mauritius, others of Madagascar, and various other blacks, not natives of India, were comprised under the general designation. The English com-

mander called a council of war, in which an action was opposed by some; those who were for attacking the enemy differed widely in their opinions as to how the attack should be carried out. The time consumed in dispute, and the anxious manner of the English officers, dispirited the troops, particularly their own countrymen, who went into action without that manifestation of daring spirit characteristic of Englishmen. The battle being begun the enemy replied with a spirited fire, and advanced to meet their assailants boldly. The native troops and Caffres in English pay fought well; but the English soldiers turned and fled, leaving their native allies to do battle alone. No attempts to rally the English were successful, not even the derision of sepoys and Caffres could move them to return to their duty, and the battle was lost. The exultation of the enemy was accompanied by tokens of supreme contempt for the beaten English; their sable comrades were equally prompt to upbraid them with their cowardice. It is but just to the English nation to say that only a few of the Europeans in the detachment were British: they consisted, for the most part, of Germans, Swiss, and Dutch, French and Portuguese deserters; all these, except, perhaps, the Dutch, were in awe of the French, whose reputation for discipline and military science, together with the late splendid victories of themselves and their allies, had spread an impression amongst all nations in India, save only a portion of the English, that they were invincible. The British retreated, and took post on the high road near Utatoa, but again fled upon the approach of the enemy. Once more the English drew up in order of battle at Peechoonda, but a third time fled before the foe, and, as from the previous encampment, without firing a shot. The conduct of the European portion of the British was thoroughly dastardly, and the officers were without influence or authority who commanded that portion of the troops. Most of the officers newly arrived from England proved worthless. The officers of the company's forces were inferior to those of the royal army as men of intelligence; their manners entitled but few of them to be received as gentlemen by their companions in arms in the royal forces: but they were more adventurous, and were better fitted for Indian campaigning every way. General intelligence, with commanders at that time, when opposed to native armies, was not important; knowledge of native character, especially in war, aptness to take advantage of every turn on the field with rapidity, contempt for mere numerical superiority, and, above all, promptitude in an enemy's presence, were the essential qualities, which the com-

\* "Historical Sketch of the Kingdom of Pandya:" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. iii. p. 199.

pany's officers possessed in a much greater degree than their comrades of the royal forces.

Having thus abandoned the country to their pursuers, the fugitive British found themselves in comparative safety under the walls of Trichinopoly. Chunda Sahib and his European coadjutors pursued, but not with sufficient rapidity. Chunda was too leisurely in his military movements, being fonder of the pomp of war than of its action. On his arrival, he withdrew from the side of the town where the company's forces were encamped, and in the opposite direction laid siege to the place. There is no ascertaining the strength of this army. Dupleix, after his return to France, described the native army alone as thirty thousand men. M. Law, by whom the French were commanded, stated, in his work entitled *Plainte de Chevalier Law, contre Sieur Dupleix*, that at no time did the entire force before Trichinopoly exceed eleven thousand eight hundred and sixty, of whom only six hundred were Europeans, and that, when afterwards a detachment was sent from that army to relieve Arcot, only six thousand six hundred and eighty men remained to conduct the siege. Mill says he is much more inclined to believe Law, as Dupleix was "one of the most audacious contemners of truth that ever engaged in crooked politics." At all events, the siege was so feebly conducted that, had the English beneath its walls shown the least enterprise and courage, the enemy could not have maintained it for many days. M. Law, in his vindication of himself, declared that he had no means to conduct the siege, no battering guns, no heavy cannon fit for guns of position, and that he had been three months before the place before any material of war suitable to his position reached him. If these statements be correct, they add much lustre to the honour, ability, and valour of the few Frenchmen who kept the power of Mohammed Ali at bay, and compelled the English to remain crouching under the city walls. M. Law threw the blame of the delay in making a capture of the place to the intrigues of Dupleix, who had entered into correspondence with Mohammed Ali, and secured his assent to deliver up the city, so that he (M. Law) was sent, not to besiege, but to receive it; Dupleix relying rather upon the dexterity and profoundness of his own schemes than upon the chivalry and skill of his soldiers.

During the delay and incompetency of the French, the English officers were actively engaged in quarrelling with one another as to the respectability of themselves personally, and of the royal and the company's armies comparatively. As commanders of men they were paltry and powerless; they had not even that

quality in which Englishmen are so seldom deficient, and which soldiers express by the rough word "pluck." It was not only in that branch of the English army in India that such a spirit prevailed: Major Lawrence had found it an insuperable obstacle to his own efficient command, and declared that the British officers were objects of supreme contempt to their native allies. At Madras, St. David's, and elsewhere, the state of things was the same. The fighting qualities of the English were dormant, because the officers sent from home were not chosen for their military qualities, but for reasons pertaining to party, or to family interest. The necessity of taking and of defending the besieged city became, at last, obvious to both armies, for its situation gave it a relative importance to the war which could not be overlooked long even by the incompetent persons then holding power in the English interest in that part of India. Mr. Mill describes it thus:—"The city of Trichinopoly, at the distance of about ninety miles from the sea, is situated on the south side of the great river Cavery, about half a mile from its bank; and, for an Indian city, was fortified with extraordinary strength. About five miles higher up than Trichinopoly, the Cavery divides itself into two branches, which, after separating to the distance of about two miles, again approached, and being only prevented from uniting, about fifteen miles below Trichinopoly, by a narrow mound, they form a peninsula, which goes by the name of Seringham; celebrated as containing one of the most remarkable edifices, and one of the most venerable pagodas, in India; and henceforward remarkable for the struggle, constituting an era in the history of India, of which it was now to be the scene."

During these events, Clive was once more active, and in a manner calculated to give him that experience which he required. When the troops were sent out to intercept or annoy the sahib, Clive, then twenty-five years of age, was appointed to an office partaking both of the civil and military: he was made commissary of the forces, with the rank of captain. He was witness of the shameful flight of his countrymen at Volcondal, but was not in a position to do anything to retrieve that disaster. He brought up, from time to time, the reinforcements, contributed something to their discipline, became thoroughly acquainted with the country whence he drew supplies for the forces, obtained useful information for the authorities at St. David's and Madras, was brought more into connection with them, so as to gain their confidence and learn their peculiarities. He was thus made acquainted with the arts of provisioning an army, and

also with the mode of organizing resources, which task, to a considerable extent, devolved upon him. By his frequent and intimate converse or correspondence with all the authorities, military as well as civil, concerned, he was able to penetrate the weak points of British policy and arrangement, and to discern who were the weak men by whom vigorous measures were impeded or marred. In a short time, he gained such experience as enabled him to request, to obtain, and, with reasonable grounds of confidence, to undertake, the responsibility of a separate command, and to verify the high opinion always expressed of him by the noble-minded and valiant Lawrence.

According to Mill, the idea of relieving Trinchinopoly by a diversion originated with the authorities at Fort St. David or Madras. Sir J. Malcolm, with more probability, attributes the idea to Clive; and Lord Macaulay endorses that view. Clive, according to these authorities, pressed upon the attention of his superiors the danger to which Trichinopoly was exposed, and the consequences that would ensue upon its fall, and requested to be allowed the command of a detachment, by which, threatening Arcot, he might compel the allies to raise the siege of the endangered city. This request was complied with, and, from that moment, the tide of fortune turned, and made 1751-2 years to be ever memorable in Indian history.

The advance of Clive upon Arcot, and its capture, is one of those stories in history which is related nearly in the same way by all historians. Every writer, whether fragmentary or voluminous, repeats the preceding narrator of this transaction. The most condensed and, at the same time, graphic account is that of Dr. Taylor, although partly copying Mill *verbatim et literatim*:—"His force consisted of two hundred Europeans and three hundred sepoys, commanded under him by eight officers, six of whom had never been in action. His artillery amounted only to three field pieces, but two eighteen pounders were sent after him. On the 31st of August, 1751, he arrived within ten miles of Arcot; it was the day of a fearful storm; thunder, lightning, and rain more terrific than is usual, even in India, seemed to render farther advance impracticable; but Clive, aware of the impression such hardihood would produce on oriental minds, pushed forward in spite of the elemental strife. Daunted by his boldness, the garrison abandoned both the town and citadel, the latter of which Clive immediately occupied, giving orders that private property should be respected. As a siege was soon to be expected, he exerted his utmost diligence to supply the fort, and made frequent sallies to

prevent the fugitive garrison, who hovered round, from resuming their courage."

Mr. Mill describes the result in the following words:—"In the meantime Chunda Sahib detached four thousand men from his army at Trichinopoly, which were joined by his son with one hundred and fifty Europeans from Pondicherry; and, together with the troops already collected in the neighbourhood, to the number of three thousand, entered the city. Clive immediately resolved upon a violent attempt to dislodge them. Going out with almost the whole of the garrison, he with his artillery forced the enemy to leave the streets in which they had posted themselves; but filling the houses they fired upon his men, and obliged him to withdraw to the fort. In warring against the people of Hindostan, a few men so often gain unaccountable victories over a host, that on a disproportion of numbers solely no enterprise can be safely condemned as rash; in this, however, Clive ran the greatest risk, with but a feeble prospect of success. He lost fifteen of his Europeans, and among them a lieutenant; and his only artillery officer, with sixteen other men, was disabled. Next day the enemy was reinforced with two thousand men from Vellore. The fort was more than a mile in circumference; the walls in many places ruinous; the towers inconvenient and decayed; and everything unfavourable to defence; yet Clive found the means of making an effectual resistance. When the enemy attempted to storm at two breaches, one of fifty and one of ninety feet, he repulsed them with but eighty Europeans and one hundred and twenty sepoys fit for duty; so effectually did he avail himself of his feeble resources, and to such a pitch of fortitude had he exalted the spirit of those under his command. During the following night the enemy abandoned the town with precipitation, after they had maintained the siege for fifty days. A reinforcement from Madras joined him on the following day; and, leaving a small garrison in Arcot, he set out to pursue the enemy. With the assistance of a small body of Mahrattas, who joined him in hopes of plunder, he gave the enemy, now greatly reduced by the dropping away of the auxiliaries, a defeat at Arni, and recovered Congeveram, into which the French had thrown a garrison, and where they had behaved with barbarity to some English prisoners; among the rest two wounded officers, whom they seized returning from Arcot to Madras, and threatened to expose on the rampart, if the English should attack."

Mill's account of the force detached from the sahib's army at Trichinopoly does not agree with the narrative of Monsieur Law, in which he professed confidence. According to

the chevalier, five thousand two hundred and eighty men were withdrawn from his army for service at Arcot. Clive returned to Fort St. David at the close of the year. As soon as the enemy learned that he had left Arcot, they collected their forces and marched into the company's territory, where they committed great ravages. Both Madras and Fort St. David had been nearly denuded of troops, to enable Clive to take the field against Arcot. Some troops afterwards arrived in these fortresses; but they were dispatched as reinforcements to Clive, so that when the enemy began their raid into the company's territory, there were no means of making head against them. In this emergency, Bengal supplied some soldiers, native and European, and Clive was not long in augmenting these by levies in his own presidency, so that by February he was able to go out against the invaders. The principal portion of the troops at Arcot made a junction with him, and he found himself at the head of a small but, in his hands, formidable force. As soon as he approached the enemy, they broke up their camp, but intended to turn their retreat to account by making a sudden assault upon Arcot, the residuary garrison of which was not by any means sufficient to man its defences.

At every period in Anglo-Indian history, there has been a sufficient number of sepoys and their officers in the English pay, corrupt or disloyal, to endanger the garrisons or enterprises of the British in most conjunctions of great danger. It was so in this instance. Two native officers had agreed to open the gates to the enemy; the plot was discovered, and the traitors seized. Accordingly, when the army of the *sahib* came before Arcot, not finding their signals answered, they concluded that they were themselves betrayed by those whom they trusted. Little confidence existing among natives, even when religion, and native land, might be supposed to bind them most together, it was a natural inference, in a war of succession, when the people were not much interested in either side, to suppose that the officers had made a double treason for a double profit. The *sahib's* army retired; but Clive was then on his way to Arcot to prevent the step which the *sahib* contemplated, and which his keen mind had anticipated. The enemy, knowing of his approach, prepared a surprise. Clive having heard of their retreat, naturally concluded that they would elude him; and was therefore astonished when the guns of the *sahib* opened with a furious cannonade upon his advanced guard, in a situation affording serious advantage to the assailants. A battle began, and Clive soon found that his opponents had mustered all their forces, and

that the effort was one of a desperate nature, the hope of altering the fortunes of the war to the disadvantage of the English, being concentrated upon that action, which continued all day with unremitting fury.

Clive felt that the artillery power of the enemy was so great, that unless it could be seized, he must next day be defeated. At ten at night he detached a party for that purpose. The night was unusually dark. By a detour, the detachment came upon the rear of the enemy's park; silently approaching the spot, no surprise being apprehended by the enemy, the infantry and artillerymen at that post were instantly overpowered, and either slain or driven away. The army of the *sahib* immediately dispersed, disheartened, and holding the name of Clive in terror. The boldness, suddenness, and judgment of the enterprise had invested it in native apprehension with something of the mysterious; and Clive was regarded by the lower orders as endowed with supernatural power.

As soon as this event terminated, Clive was ordered to Madras. This step was imprudent, as the enemy might have once more gained heart by his absence. The French troops were, however, recalled at the same moment to Pondicherry, in ignorance of Clive's withdrawal; and without such a *point d'appui* as the French afforded, the *sahib* could not have re-collected his demoralized men. The object of the recall of Clive to the presidency, was to send him and his troops to Trichinopoly, where, from what had already transpired, there was really nothing to fear.

The conduct of Clive was appreciated at Madras, and the fame of his heroism spread over all India. Still the remarks of Lord Macaulay are undoubtedly an exaggeration, when he says of the feeling at Fort St. George, "Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command." His lordship, however, conveys what is obviously true, when he expresses the opinion, "Had the entire direction of the war been entrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appeared in all the movements of the English, except when he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they had met elsewhere." Their opinion was certainly reasonable, and the circumstances which made it so were connected with the system of favouritism which, instead of a just and patriotic recognition of merit, influenced all royal military appointments; and the insolence, contempt, and neglect with which officers of superior merit

in the company's service were treated by the traders, amongst whom there existed an envious and yet arrogant feeling towards all professional men.

During these events, Clive showed not only the audacity of courage for which he had during several years received credit, but attributes of a higher order of soldierhood were conspicuously displayed. He proved himself to be remarkably subordinate to authority. Mr. Mill, and Lord Macaulay following Mr. Mill, represent this as surprising, seeing that his youth was so turbulent. Sir John Malcolm and Dr. Hayman Wilson affirm that the subordination of his military conduct, notwithstanding his frequent disagreement in opinion with official superiors, was in harmony with the habits of his earlier years. Sir John Malcolm severely criticises the expression of Mr. Mill; and the learned professor of Sanscrit at Oxford observes:—"There is nothing in the history of his adolescence to warrant the application (of the term turbulent); he seems to have been stubborn and dogged rather than turbulent." His ambition was animated by a passionate patriotism; and his jealousy for the glory of his country was united to a policy statesmanlike and wise. This was exemplified in his destruction of the pillar of Dupleix, when, in his career of victory, he arrived at the place where that monument was erected. He felt that it was an insult to his country, and therefore razed it; but he also judged that so long as it remained a memorial of French prowess and success, it would influence the superstitious natives to respect the power of France. Not satisfied with destroying the proud column, he swept the city itself from the face of the earth, and by this decisiveness, filled the imagination of the Asiatic soldiers of both armies with ideas of his boldness, comprehensiveness, and invulnerability, as well as with a fatalistic notion that victory sat upon the banners of the English, while the day of French glory had set.

When Clive was ready to take the field against the French and Chunda Sahib, who still remained before Trichinopoly, Major Lawrence arrived from England, and, as senior officer, assumed the command. Lawrence was probably not a politician, but he was well acquainted with the politics of the Carnatic and of the whole Deccan; he was a man of shrewd sense, and great penetration of character. As a soldier, he was fit for high command; and, had he served in any army where promotion went by merit, he would not have ranked as a major, while he commanded, with ability and good service to his country, armies in the field. Clive was delighted at the arrival of Lawrence, as so few of the English officers

were competent for any portion of responsibility; he had also a high sense of the military capacity and personal excellence of the major, which feeling was reciprocated by the senior of the two gallant friends. Both were incapable of jealousy, and exulted in each other's glory; so that it would have been difficult to find two persons of great talent more likely to co-operate efficiently.

While Clive was preparing his forces at Fort St. David's for the relief of Trichinopoly, the rajah sought assistance from Mysore, whence a large army was dispatched to his aid, accompanied by a strong division of Mahratta mercenaries, which had already served with Clive in the neighbourhood of Arcot. According to the Chevalier Law, the French and allied army did not then amount to more than fifteen thousand; this statement was confirmed by the French Company, but Dupleix informed the French public that it was nearly twice the number. Whatever its force, it held its position firmly in spite of the Mysore and Mahratta auxiliaries of Mohammed Ali. Such was the position of things when the army under Lawrence marched against the besiegers. Dupleix ordered Law to intercept this force, which was impossible, as that gallant man, already embarrassed by the impracticable orders of Dupleix, had extended his force to keep up an effectual blockade, in the hope of starving the besieged; so that his lines were, to use his own language, "weak at all points," and only by his superior tactics could he deceive the Mysore chief as to his actual numbers and actual weakness. He urged Dupleix to organize the means at Pondicherry of intercepting Lawrence, assuring him of the utter incapacity of his exhausted force to deal with his numerous foes. Dupleix, arrogant and deficient in military science, renewed his orders, which were of course not obeyed, because impossible. The result was, that the little army of Lawrence arrived to the relief of the beleaguered city. The French removed their forces to the island of Seringham, against the wishes of Chunda Sahib, who believed whatever Dupleix said as to what ought to be done in the circumstances. The French burned a large portion of their baggage and munitions. Ormesays that stores of provisions were also thus consumed, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Rajah of Mysore or the English. The chevalier, who knew best, and wrote like a man of truth and honour, declares that he had no stores of provisions—that his supplies were small, and he was becoming apprehensive of extremities.

Anxious to carry matters with his usual rapidity, Clive suggested to Lawrence that it

would be desirable to place a division of his army at the other side of the Colaroone, so that supplies to the French might be effectually intercepted. Lawrence pointed out the danger of dividing his army, lest each might in turn be attacked and overpowered. Nevertheless he believed that, if in Clive's hands, the measure would be carried through, and he gave him command of a division of his army to accomplish the proposed task. Clive executed the commands imposed upon him, or rather exercised efficiently the discretion confided to him, for Lawrence allowed him to take his own course. The measures of Clive were soon proved to be necessary, for Dupleix dispatched D'Auteuil with a powerful force and large convoy for the relief of the garrison at Seringham. Clive interposed on D'Auteuil's line of march, who, afraid to meet the conqueror of Arcot, retired into a fort whither Clive pursued him, capturing the fort, garrison, and commander, with all the provisions and munitions of war intended for Law. Lawrence, meantime, cannonaded Seringham with such judgment and effect, that the French greatly suffered, and, in addition, hunger began to inflict its miseries. Chunda Sahib's soldiers deserted in large numbers. The Mahratta legions did not like to fight against Clive, and went over to him in bodies. Chunda Sahib at last threw himself upon the mercy of the King of Tanjore, who had also become an ally of Mohammed Ali. The Tanjore general gave his sacred promise of protection, but no sooner had the sahib entered the camp than he was placed in irons. While he was thus situated, the French surrendered, prisoners of war, to Major Lawrence. There then arose disputes among the Mysorean, Mahratta, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly chiefs, as to the custody of the sahib. Major Lawrence, to deliver him out of their hands, proposed his confinement in an English fort. The rajahs retired to take this proposition into consideration, but the cruel King of Tanjore ordered the captive to be assassinated, and so settled the debate. Dupleix charged Major Lawrence with the murder, which the false-hearted Frenchman knew well was an act impossible to the brave and good man upon whom he sought to fix so infamous an imputation. The French East India Company charged Dupleix with the intention of imprisoning the unfortunate nabob, and making himself, or causing himself to be made, by his influence at the court of Delhi, soubahdar, or viceroy of the Deccan. Dupleix, however, was in possession of the fact, that the nabob intended to break faith with him as soon as his English and native enemies were mastered. Thus cruelty and deceit prevailed

amongst all the authorities in the Deccan, and prepared for that breaking up and recasting of all the governments there, which eventually ensued.

While affairs were proving so disastrous to the French throughout the Carnatic, the industrious and crafty Dupleix was, nevertheless, carrying on vast intrigues in another direction. In his plots with the various claimants for the viceroyalty of the Deccan, he acted through an agent named Bussy, a man almost as cunning and unscrupulous as himself. The Mogul refused to recognise the French *protégé* for the viceroyalty, and conferred the title and authority on Gazee-ood-Deen, eldest son of Nizam-ool-Moolk, and the legitimate heir of the coveted post. The competitor of Gazee was Salabat Jung, who was in possession, and refused to surrender his honours. The incursions of the Mahrattas so enfeebled and harassed the Mogul empire, that the padishaw was unable to enforce what he had commanded, and the intrigues of Bussy were so cunning and so constant, that Salabat Jung held his honours; while Dupleix, through his satrap Bussy, virtually ruled the Deccan, and indirectly exercised extensive influence over the Mogul. This great influence might have contented his ambition, but as the Carnatic was a part of the Deccan, he considered nothing secure until the whole of the region so designated was at his feet. Unfortunately for the peace of India, and of the English, the subtle genius of Dupleix found scope, and out of the very materials of defeat, he evoked renewed influence.

When Major Lawrence had won Trichinopoly, he was preparing to march through the province, and subject all opposition before Mohammed Ali. He urged that prince to muster his forces and accompany him, but was astounded to find that Mohammed had, unknown to his English ally, gained the alliance of Mysore by promising to give to the rajah the city of Trichinopoly, when the French were driven away. This promise, Mohammed, of course, never intended to perform, but now the Mysore rajah, at the head of twenty thousand men, demanded its fulfilment. The Mahrattas, too, had been led to entertain hopes that it should be given to them, both by the possessor, and by the promised possessor. They now demanded that the Rajah of Mysore should surrender his claim to them as a reward of their services, indemnifying himself how he could; and, at the same time, they intimated to the actual sovereign, that the true construction of his promises to them was that they should have the city. Mohammed refused to fulfil any



promise, pleading that extreme necessity justified promises which there was no intention of performing—a plea, the force of which his tormentors felt, because it accorded with their own principles, but they were not therefore the more ready to mitigate their demands. The chief of Trichinopoly at last persuaded the Mysorean chief to accept Madras, with the promise of receiving Trichinopoly also within two months. He pretended to accede, but went away resolved upon revenge. Major Lawrence advised the president of Madras to deliver up the city to the chief of Mysore, or else to seize him and the Mahratta leader until security was taken that they would not join the French. The company's representatives did nothing, the only thing which appears to have lain within the scope of their talents.

Dupleix was at once made acquainted with all these transactions, and from that hour resolved to make another effort to regain ascendancy in the Carnatic. He opened correspondence with all the aggrieved parties, and had the audacity to correspond secretly with Mohammed Ali himself. His offers to them all were most alluring, and so timed and put in such form, as to make it their obvious policy to keep his secrets and prepare to betray one another when the opportune moment for so doing should arrive.

In consequence of his intrigues, as well as those set on foot directly by the disappointed allies of Mohammed, the standard of revolt was raised in various districts under the government of the ill-starred prince, whose victories were as disastrous as defeats, and even more dishonourable. Gingee was considered a strong place, and the governor refused to render allegiance to Mohammed Ali. The English undertook to reduce it, and fortune once more forsook their standard. The garrison consisted chiefly of French soldiers, and the English considered its capture would put an end to the war in Mohammed Ali's dominions. This was the opinion of the civilians by whom Major Lawrence and Captain Clive were overruled. Lawrence expostulated in vain: he pointed out a really feasible plan of procedure; but the heads of the traders at Madras and Fort St. David were turned with success, and they issued orders with a self-confident air, as if by their wisdom all had been accomplished, which only the talents and experience of Lawrence, and the genius of Clive, had achieved. The repulse of the English at Gingee was so signal, that the predictions of Major Lawrence were fulfilled. The French gained heart, and the feeble natives began once more to believe that they could conquer.

Dupleix, although badly sustained from home, found means to reinforce the troops at Gingee, so as to enable him to operate in the field. He, in fact, organized another army, and sent them under the walls of the astonished English of Fort St. David. The approach of the French to that place was anticipated at Madras, and one hundred Swiss were sent by sea to strengthen it. These men were sent in open boats, contrary to the advice of Lawrence, whose opinions were overruled by the self-confident, pragmatical, and incompetent council: the result was another painful fulfilment of Lawrence's predictions—the boats and troops were captured by a French man-of-war. Dupleix, cognizant of the intention of his enemies, and calculating upon their infatuated ignorance and conceit, took his measures accordingly, and with success. This was the first direct violation of the treaty of peace between the two countries. Hitherto the French and English only met in hostility as the allies, and acting under the ostensible orders, of contending native chiefs; in capturing English boats and troops, he assumed to make war upon England without her orders or acquiescence of her government, which afterwards held him responsible for his conduct.

Major Lawrence went forth against the new army, by which English territory was entered with hostile intent at a time of peace between the two nations. His force was chiefly from the nabob's army, consisting of a division of four thousand men. He had, in addition, a brigade consisting of four hundred Europeans and one thousand seven hundred trained sepoys. The French were greatly inferior in numbers, but superior in quality. They had about the same number of regular infantry, and consisting of the same proportions of Europeans and sepoys; but the European force in the English service was made up chiefly of mercenaries. Dupleix's European infantry were not wholly French, but were chiefly recruits lately sent out, and were physically inferior to the Europeans in English pay; but they felt that they were fighting the battles of their own nation, which gave them an ardour such as the mercenaries in the English ranks could not feel. The French had a rabble of native adherents; but only a few were enrolled as soldiers. Making up for the disparity in this respect, the French had a fine regiment of cavalry, numbering five hundred men. The nabob's troops with the English consisted partly of cavalry, but of the worst class. Major Lawrence offered battle, which was not accepted; but, making a feint of retreating, he lured on his vain-glorious enemies. The battle was short and decisive: the French

were signally defeated; but the nabob's cavalry would not pursue, but, instead, plundered the French camp. The energy and skill of Lawrence were displayed with striking effect in this action, and he was seconded by his friend and lieutenant, Clive, with his usual splendid military ability.

As the Mysorean general hovered about Trichinopoly, Lawrence could not follow up, in the direction he wished, the victory he had gained, nor could he spare troops from his little army for separate services. The ever-daring and inventive Clive undertook, with two hundred undisciplined European recruits, and such natives as he could muster, to capture the fort of Covelong, defended by the French. He collected some natives, and formed of them two sepoy companies of one hundred men each; and with this small detachment repaired to Covelong. The European recruits were morally and physically inferior: the sepoys were wholly ignorant of the use of arms. A shot fired from Covelong killed one of the Europeans, when they all took to flight. Clive, with the utmost difficulty, succeeded in inducing them to return to their duty. Siege was laid to the fort; but the sentinels being alarmed by a loud discharge of artillery, fled and hid themselves: one of them was found, after diligent search, concealed in a well. Clive remonstrated, persuaded, rallied them on their timidity, appealed to their manhood, and, by his own example, roused in them the sense of manliness, so that they became courageous, well-disciplined, and ready to dare whatever their leader's example pointed out as due to honour and duty. Probably, no band of timid, unsoldierly men were ever made so much of in so short a time, or made to perform so much. During this time, he was ill from the effects of fatigue, anxiety, and the climate. The French garrison surrendered, and Clive occupied it with a portion of his small force, somewhat augmented by deserters from the French, and men of a similar stamp to those he commanded when they first came under his plastic hand! Scarcely had he taken possession, when a French force was sent from Chingleput, to succour the garrison, ignorant of its capture. Clive laid an ambush, and, by one volley, placed *hors-de-combat* one hundred French soldiers, he then charged them, killing and wounding many and capturing three hundred. The

rest fled panic-struck, hotly pursued by their prompt assailant to the gates of Chingleput. To this place, reputed at the time to be one of the strongest fortifications in India, he laid siege. His artillery was very inadequate; but he effected a breach, and was about to storm it, when the French commander capitulated, on being allowed to retire with his men. After these events, Clive returned to Madras, where the incapable men who had thwarted him so often, regarded it as a great honour for him to be made the object of their commendations and attentions. His health now obliged him to seek repose, for his late achievements, inferior in ability and activity to none of his previous ones, were performed in weakness and suffering. He married a lady named Maskelyne, sister to the astronomer royal, of scientific notoriety. Macaulay describes her as "handsome and accomplished," and adds, "her husband's letters, it is said, contain proofs that he was devotedly attached to her." Very soon after they had received the congratulations of their friends upon their marriage, they embarked for England, where Clive arrived after an absence of ten years, several of which were spent with renown to his country and himself. He had redeemed her fallen military reputation in India, humbled the gifted Dupleix, repressed French power in the Deccan, saved, with his coadjutor and friend, Lawrence, the Carnatic, at all events for the time, from becoming a French province, and filled India and Europe with the fame of his bravery and military resources. His departure from India was an irreparable loss to the English, as they were soon made to feel. Indeed, both before he left India and subsequently, wherever he or Lawrence was not, defeat and shame attended the English name from the arrival of Dupleix at Pondicherry. It is customary for writers to give all the glory to Clive, who knew the worth of Lawrence too well to accept it. When, on the young hero's return, the directors of the East India Company offered him "a sword set with diamonds," he nobly refused to accept it unless Lawrence received one of equal or superior value. He regarded that fine officer as his teacher and benefactor; and the latter was immoderately proud and fond of his pupil and *protégé*.

## CHAPTER LXX.

BRITISH CONQUEST OF THE CARNATIC—*Continued*: FROM CLIVE'S RETURN TO ENGLAND TO THE EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH.

WHILE Clive was reducing forts, getting married, receiving jewelled swords at the India-house in London, and enjoying his *otium cum dignitate* at Manchester and Market Drayton, Lawrence was bravely battling against all odds, ill-supported by the vacillating English at forts St. David and St. George. Dupleix had won over certain Mahratta chiefs, who, with three thousand men, marched to reinforce his army, which was then about to encounter Lawrence at Bahoor. On their way, the Mahrattas heard that the French were defeated, and that Lawrence and Clive were in the field; they immediately marched into the British camp, declaring that they would not fight against these two heroes, whom the gods favoured, but would serve under them against the disturbers of the peace of Southern India. The armies went into what is called in Europe winter quarters; and Dupleix, who had no competitor in diplomacy, succeeded in regaining by that means all the influence of which the British had deprived him in the field. Mysoreans and Mahrattas declared open alliance with the French. The designs of Dupleix were penetrated by Major Lawrence, and such advice given by him as met the necessities of the occasion; but although it belonged to his profession to judge of the practical bearing of Dupleix's new alliances, and the company's civil servants acknowledged his competency to pronounce an opinion, they did not in any case follow it, so as to carry out any plan of contravention to the schemes of the French director-general. Even the advice and commands of Lawrence to the officer in authority at Trichinopoly were not attended to, the civil officers of the company overruling his orders. On one occasion, Lawrence detected a plot to assassinate Captain Dalton, the officer in command of the garrison at Trichinopoly, by the Mysorean general Nunjeragh and the Mahratta chief Marao, and upon assassinating the English officer, to seize the city. Lawrence ordered Dalton to seize them, as a conference proposed by them for their own purposes would afford opportunity. The president and council of Madras gave Dalton contrary orders; the captain was not assassinated, but the detected traitors were left free to carry on all their treasons except the seizure of the city. Mill blames the morality of Lawrence's orders, and

admits the soundness of the policy; but it is obvious that Mill had not made himself acquainted with the whole case. Dr. Hayman Wilson defends Lawrence in the following terms:—"In justice to Major Lawrence, it must be remarked that this advice was given only upon the detection of a plot, set on foot by the Mysorean general, to assassinate Captain Dalton, and surprise Trichinopoly, there being no open rupture yet even with Mohammed Ali, much less with the English. 'It was on the discovery of this,' says the Major, 'that I proposed Dalton should seize on the Maissorean and Morarow, which he might easily have done by a surprise, as he often had conferences with them; and I must own I thought, in justice, it would have been right to have done it, but the presidency were of another opinion.'\*" Never did man pursue a policy with more heroic obstinacy than Dupleix. Mr. Mill places his conduct in this respect in a correct light, when he thus describes his condition, resources, and prospects in 1752:—"Dupleix, though so eminently successful in adding to the number of combatants on his side, was reduced to the greatest extremity for pecuniary supplies. The French East India Company were much poorer than even the English; the resources which they furnished from Europe were proportionally feeble; and though perfectly willing to share with Dupleix in the hopes of conquest, when enjoyment was speedily promised, their impatience for gain made them soon tired of the war; and they were now importunately urging Dupleix to find the means of concluding a peace. Under these difficulties Dupleix had employed his own fortune, and his own credit, in answering the demands of the war; and, as a last resource, he now turned his thoughts to Mortiz Ali, the governor of Vellore. He held up to him the prospect of even the nabobship itself, in hopes of drawing from him the riches which he was reputed to possess. Mortiz Ali repaired to Pondicherry, and even advanced a considerable sum; but finding that much more was expected, he broke off the negotiation, and retired to his fort. The contending parties looked forward with altered prospects to the next campaign. By the co-operation of the Mysoreans, and the junction of the Mahrattas, the latter of whom, from the abilities of their leader, and

\* Lawrence's *Narrative*, p. 39.

their long experience of European warfare, were no contemptible allies, the French had greatly the advantage in numerical force. In the capacity, however, of their officers, and in the quality of their European troops, they soon felt a remarkable inferiority. Lawrence, without being a man of talents, was an active and clear-headed soldier; and the troops whom he commanded, both officers and men, appeared, by a happy contingency, to combine in their little body all the virtues of a British army. The European troops of the enemy, on the other hand, were the very refuse of the French population." Lord Macaulay, following Mill, and partly adopting Dupleix's own account, which is little to be relied on, gives a similar picture of the helplessness of Dupleix, except as he relied solely on his own genius. His lordship quotes Dupleix's own expression, that with the exception of Bussy he had not an officer on whom he could place the least reliance. Most of these statements are greatly exaggerated, and some of them totally untrue. It suited the circumstances in which Dupleix was placed, when defending himself in France against the French Company, to declaim against that body for its neglect of his requisitions; but the fact was, its supplies were lavish until it became convinced that he was squandering them in wars dangerous to France, and contrary to the commercial interests of the French Company trading to the east. It is astonishingly strange that such writers as Mill and Macaulay should adopt the assertion of Dupleix, that he had no good officers! Did he not persecute the intrepid, politic, and gifted Labourdonnais? Was it not by his own unmilitary measures that the Chevalier Law, a brilliant officer, was paralysed before Trichinopoly. D'Auteuil, Latouch, and other officers in his service, showed superior parts, but were rendered powerless by the complication of his own schemes, or the genius of Lawrence and Clive. Lawrence, in his own account of the transactions which arose out of the fertility of Dupleix's tricks, describes the efforts of the French officers at Bahoar and Trichinopoly to keep their men up under heavy fire, as most gallant, skilful, and honourable. The men sent out to Dupleix were no doubt such as he described them—children, thieves, and galley slaves; but he had also fine French regiments, such as met the armies of Europe with renown; and he had large supplies of Madagascees, who had been thoroughly trained in the Mauritius on French principles of drill and discipline, and well officered by gentlemen of the French army and navy. He had also good engineer officers, and artillery officers, such as the

French military schools produced. It was not of their officers and French soldiers that Chevalier Law and other French officers complained during the discussions which occurred in France after the return of Dupleix, but of the want of military knowledge and courage of Dupleix himself; and of the impracticability, in a military sense, of schemes which grew out of Dupleix's political speculations and alliances.

As to his resources, he had enriched both himself and the company's Indian exchequer, by his influence over the resources of Southern India, and by the great accessions of territory he acquired. When Mr. Mill says that the French company was poorer than that of England, he overlooks the fact,\* that the government of France itself favoured the French East India Company, the resources of the state having been applied to the aggrandizement of the company, until the exchequer of France was exhausted, the extravagance of the company's agents in India, and their love of incessant war, having been one of the potential causes of that exhaustion. The whole history of these transactions shows that the estimate formed of Lawrence in the above passage by Mill, and copied by Macaulay, Taylor, Murray, and numerous others, place his talents below the reality. As to the superiority of the English officers to the French, there is nothing related on Mr. Mill's own pages to prove the assertion. There were no men up to the period to which the history is now brought, able to cope with the French officers, when Lawrence or Clive were absent. Whether in the open field or in the defence of fortified places, French military science was in the ascendant in almost every instance, except when Lawrence or Clive, or both, were present by their heroism and ability to turn the tide of battle. An accurate and careful examination of the authentic documents of the time, French and English, will confirm the allegation that the general current of modern historians, following Mill, and more recently Macaulay, have exaggerated or misstated the disadvantages of the French. Dupleix emerged from the temporary cessation of arms in 1752, consequent upon the weather, in a condition to menace the English, and sustain the prospect which his ambition and hope presented, that with proper management of his native allies he would humble the English in the Carnatic, perhaps expel them from Southern India, and himself reign supreme in the vast and magnificent dominions of the Deccan.

In the first week of the year 1753, the two armies took the field. The French were

\* See chapters on the French Company for trading in the East.

very superior in numbers, especially in cavalry. Five hundred European infantry, sixty European cavalry; two thousand sepoys; four thousand Mahrattas, nearly all cavalry, commanded by Morari Rao, an able officer well acquainted with European modes of warfare, comprised the French movable army, independent of the large forces before Trichinopoly. The English army under Major Lawrence was composed of seven hundred European foot-soldiers, two thousand sepoys, and fifteen hundred of the nabob's irregular cavalry, who would any time turn aside to plunder, however urgent the requirements of honourable war.

The French showed good generalship, facts again confuting Mr. Mill's disparagement of their officers. They avoided a general action, employing their superiority of cavalry in cutting off convoys, so that Lawrence and his troops were exposed to great fatigue, and sometimes he was obliged to march with his whole army to ensure the safe arrival of a large convoy at its destination. This desultory war continued until the 20th of April, when a letter from Captain Dalton informed Lawrence that he had scarcely fifteen days' provisions in the magazine of the city. He had made a certain Mohammedan chief his storekeeper, and, like the Turkish pashas during the war with Russia, so this more ancient specimen of Mohammedan officer and ruler sold the provisions for his own profit. Lawrence determined on marching at once to the relief of the place. His march was attended by many casualties. The nabob's troops deserted in great numbers, so did some of the sepoys, and even of the Europeans. Dupleix's agents were busy offering better pay. Sickness had also made inroads upon his force. When he arrived at the place, and completed effective garrison arrangements, he had so small a force remaining for field operations, that the prospect of carrying on the war with advantage, without considerable reinforcements, seemed very gloomy. His European detachment was reduced to five hundred men, two thousand sepoys were at his disposal, and the nabob attached to these infantry forces a division of three thousand ill-paid and insubordinate horse. Scarcely had Lawrence arrived when French reinforcements hastened to strengthen Nunjeragh. These consisted of two hundred Europeans and five hundred sepoys. The forces were now relatively such that the French and their allies could not capture the place, and the English and the nabob could not raise the siege. From 6th of May, 1753 to the 11th of October, 1754, the conflict was sustained. Lawrence and his troops performing

prodigies of valour, for which he received only praise, and that was scantily bestowed by his own countrymen in the chief settlements of India.

The most condensed account, and at the same time sufficient in detail, which has appeared, of these transactions, amongst recent publications, is that by Hugh Murray, Esq., F.R.S.E. He thus describes the defence of Trichinopoly by Lawrence:—"The major was then able to open a communication with the southern districts for a supply of necessaries, and obtained some assistance from the Rajah of Tanjore, whose alliance, however, like that of all Indian princes, wavered with every variation of fortune. It became impossible in this scarcity to supply the inhabitants of so great a city as Trichinopoly, who, to the number of four hundred thousand inhabitants, were compelled to quit the place, and seek temporary shelter elsewhere; and the immense circuit of its walls was occupied only by the two thousand men composing the garrison. The provisioning of this important fortress now became the principal object of contest, the entire strength of both sides being drawn around it; and the French, with an immensely superior force, placed themselves in such positions as enabled them to intercept completely the entrance of convoys from the south. The brave Lawrence twice attacked, and, though with very inferior numbers, drove them from their posts, and opened the way for his supplies. On no former occasion, indeed, had the valour of the English troops, and their superiority to those of the enemy, been more signally displayed. The garrison, however, had nearly, by their own supineness, forfeited the benefit of all these exertions. One morning at three o'clock, the guard having fallen asleep, the French advanced to the assault, applied their scaling-ladders, made themselves masters of a battery, and were advancing into the city, when several of the soldiers happening to fall into a deep pit, their cries alarmed their companions, some of whom fired their muskets. The assailants thus conceiving themselves to be discovered, made a general discharge, beat their drums, and advanced with shouts of *Vive le Roi*. Happily a considerable body of British was quartered near the spot, who were immediately led on by Lieutenant Harrison to such an advantageous position, and directed with so much judgment, that the foremost of the storming-party were soon cut down, the ladders carried off or broken, and all of the enemy who had entered, to the number of three hundred and sixty, were made prisoners. Thus the enterprise, at first so promising, caused to them a loss

greater than any sustained by their arms during the course of this memorable siege. Soon afterwards, however, an English detachment, being sent out to escort a convoy of provisions, was attacked by a corps of eighteen thousand natives and four hundred Europeans. An inexperienced officer, who had the command, drew up his men in small parties at wide intervals. Suddenly Morari Rao and Innis Khan, with twelve thousand Mysorean horse, advanced with loud shouts at full gallop, and charged this ill-constructed line. Our countrymen had scarcely time to fire one volley, when they found their ranks broken by the enemy's cavalry. Deserted by the sepoys, they were left, only one hundred and eighty in number, without any hope of escape; upon which they determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible. The whole were either killed or taken, including a company of grenadiers, who had acted a prominent part in all the late victories.

"Amid these gallant exploits, the siege of Trichinopoly was protracted a year and a half, during which neither the French nor their numerous allies obtained any decisive advantage. Mr. Mill considers the object as very unworthy of such strenuous efforts; yet it ought to be remembered that the company were deciding on that spot the destiny of the Carnatic, and perhaps the very existence of their establishment in India. To have yielded in such circumstances might have realized the views of Dupleix, whose boast it had been that he would reduce Madras to a fishing-village." The same author thus notices other transactions, by which the fate of the war was more influenced:—"Important events were meantime taking place at the court of the Deccan, where Bussy with his followers were dictating or directing every movement. This influence indeed he seemed entitled to expect, both from the generosity and prudence of Salabat Jung, who had been raised by the French to his present lofty station, and by them alone was maintained in it against the Mahrattas, and Gazee-ood-Deen, whom the Mogul had authorised to expel him. The latter, however, as he was approaching with a prodigious army, died suddenly, not without suspicion, perhaps unjust, of having been poisoned by the adherents of his rival. Salabat being thus relieved from apprehension, the great men around him, viewing with much indignation the thralldom of their master to a handful of strangers, urged him to adopt measures for extricating himself from this humiliating situation; and at their suggestion he took certain steps, which were favoured by a temporary absence of Bussy. The pay of the troops was withheld, and on plausible

pretexts they were broken into detachments, and sent into different quarters. The foreigner, however, on his return immediately reassembled them, and his own force aided by the alarm of a Mahratta invasion, enabled him to dictate terms to the soubahdar. He procured the discharge of the hostile ministers; and taking advantage of the accumulated arrears demanded, and obtained as a security against future deficiencies, the cession of an extensive range of territory on the coasts of Coromandel and Orissa, including the Northern Circars. This, in addition to former acquisitions, gave the French a territory six hundred miles in extent, reaching from Medapilly to the Pagoda of Juggernaut, and yielding a revenue of £855,000."

Thus, while a war in the Carnatic drained the exchequer of Pondicherry, Dupleix and his accomplice, Bussy, took care by their power at the court of the Deccan, to acquire territory, and receive far more than sufficient to compensate any such drain; while the Carnatic itself was, in the prospective policy of Dupleix, soon to belong to France, and England, utterly vanquished, would be compelled to withdraw from Madras and the shores of Coromandel.

Whatever might be the difficulties which presented themselves around Trichinopoly, or elsewhere in the Carnatic, it is obvious that Dupleix had encouragement to persevere, and found the means of doing so by his negotiations in the capital of the Deccan itself. He had there assumed a position which rendered it incompatible with the continuance of French power to allow a rival in the fairest province of the government of the soubahdar, a government which virtually belonged to France, and to Dupleix as her representative. The interference of the English at all in the Carnatic was a proclamation that the influence of Dupleix at the court of the soubahdar was an usurpation. The displeasure of the French East India Company with Dupleix was now considerable, the French government having been importuned by that of England to put a stop to his career. The English government could no longer be deaf to the reclamations of their own East India Company, and intimated to the French ministry that they could not any longer be burthened, directly or indirectly, with the expenses of war at a time of peace. A conference was held in London, when all parties agreed to place the blame of the bloodshed in India upon Dupleix. He seems to have found no advocate either in the French Company or the French ministry. Mr. Mill, who can always see the errors and defects of his own countrymen easier than those of their deadliest ene-

mies, has afforded him a posthumous defence which inculpates more by its dubious extenuations, than would a direct censure. The opinion formed of Dupleix by his countrymen was the correct one: he involved his country in a sanguinary war to gratify her love of glory and his own. Unwilling to take up the quarrel in Europe, they gave up Dupleix, his conquests, and his schemes, and conceded all that England demanded. This spirit of concession was no doubt greatly influenced by the fact that, during the London conferences, England sent out a powerful fleet to India—an example which France was unable to follow.

M. Godheu was appointed to supersede Dupleix, and with special instructions to terminate hostilities. He arrived in Pondicherry on the 2nd of August, 1754, and conducted negotiations in the spirit of his mission. The siege of Trichinopoly was raised in virtue of the treaty which followed, and all acts of war were stopped on both sides. Godheu was no doubt influenced by the fact which exercised so much weight with the French ministry—the transmission of a powerful fleet and large military reinforcements; otherwise it is difficult to suppose that he would surrender everything for which the French had fought, and concede all for which the English had appealed to arms. Such, however, was the result of his mission to Pondicherry. The French in India were deeply mortified at two clauses in the treaty, one of which recognised Mohammed Ali as nabob of the Carnatic, thus giving to the English an ostensible triumph; the other depriving the French of the vast territory lately acquired, and thus inflicting upon them in the eyes of the natives defeat in the most obvious and substantial form. But there was no use in murmuring, or resisting Godheu, for Admiral Watson had arrived with three line-of-battle ships, and a sloop of war, and nearly a thousand English soldiers. Godheu had brought with him fifteen hundred French; but the naval force of Watson, and the material of war which he took out, constituted a preponderating power; besides, it was known that the English had determined, if necessary, greatly to augment their forces, and France was not in a condition at that time to maintain, either in Europe or the East, a naval war with England.

When Godheu, and Saunders, the president of Madras—a very commonplace man when compared with his French competitors—had settled all matters thus satisfactorily to the English, they returned home, leaving their nations, as they supposed, at perfect peace with one another. But these appearances were illusory; the respective relations of the two nations to

the native powers were too complex not to necessitate disputes by developing conflicting interests. Both nations had maintained so intricate a diplomacy that it was next to impossible to retrace their steps, and stand to one another *in statu quo ante bellum*. The policy of Dupleix was conceived with so much genius, and worked out by him and Bussy with so much foresight, and with the contemplation of so many contingencies, and consecutive developments, that it irretrievably committed the French. They had placed themselves in such a position that they must go on in a career of conquest and intrigue, until the thrones of the Indian chiefs was at their disposal, or sink into mere traders craving permission to traffic from petty chiefs, and in continual danger of losing all chance of mercantile success, in consequence of the superior trading capacity which the English and Dutch everywhere displayed. The roots of French diplomacy had so spread and fastened among the courts of Southern India, that there they must remain, unless cut out by the sword. The English eventually found that solution of the difficulty the only one, and did not shrink from undertaking the laborious task.

The English found their own treaties with the natives so complicated that it was no easy matter for them to carry out thoroughly and heartily, as was their interest to do, their treaty with the French. Thus, when the treaty was signed, the general of the Mysorean army before Trichinopoly, refused to recognise it, and remained before the place until events in Mysore compelled his return. One of the causes of that return was the appearance of a French force in aid of the soubahdar of the Deccan to collect tribute, which the Mysoreans refused to pay, and which the soubahdar would never have demanded but for French instigation, which was offered in consequence of the English affording assistance to Mohammed Ali, their old *protégé*, for whom they warred so long and so well, in order to enable him to collect the revenues of Madura, an enterprise in which they conquered all opposition, but could raise no revenue. The British entered into a money bargain with Mohammed, which was at once mean and impolitic. They agreed to enforce the collection of his revenues in certain rebellious districts, if he would give them half the sum raised. This was a bargain intended by the English to serve both parties; they could not afford to pay and employ troops for the rajah's benefit. It eventually served neither Mohammed Ali nor his patrons. After a fruitless attempt to collect the revenue, the British retired from the task baffled and chagrined.

Salabat Jung and Bussy, the French agent at the court of the Deccan, at the head of the French troops marched against the Rajah of Mysore, to collect tribute due by that prince, or alleged to be due, to the soubahdar. At the same time, the Mahrattas made one of their raids upon the territory, so that the Mysorean general withdrew from the neighbourhood of Trichinopoly to defend his master's lands. The rajah feared the Mahrattas, and therefore pretended submission to the viceroy. The English now displayed their triumph by investing their *protégé* with the insignia of his office as Nabob of the Carnatic, at his capital of Arcot. The efforts made by the British to gain the submission of the zemindars and polygars, so that Mohammed might receive his revenues, offended the French: they represented that the employment of English troops to interfere in the internal affairs of the Carnatic was in violation of the recent treaty. The real ground of annoyance with the French was the prospect of the nabob having a revenue, and being thereby enabled to defend himself. The governor of Vellore refused to recognise the nabob's authority, at all events, so far as revenue was concerned; and the determination of the English to enforce that authority was pleaded by the French as a ground for military interference in the refractory governor's behalf. The English, intimidated by this demonstration and the strength of Vellore, withdrew their troops. Other chiefs in his neighbourhood followed the example of the ruler of Vellore, and the whole of that part of the Carnatic became disturbed, and continued so for years. Madura itself was suddenly seized by one of the boldest of the khans, and held in defiance of the British. The French were solicitous to interfere more decidedly by arms, but the intrigues at the court of the Deccan kept them busy: they, however, perpetually incited the petty chiefs and district governors to revolt, being as determined as ever to prevent Mohammed Ali from obtaining the rule of the Carnatic, while they construed every attempt of the English to establish that rule (the treaty with the French having fully recognised it) into covert war against France. Nothing could be more evident at the close of 1755, than that the war between the French and English must be fought over again so far as the Carnatic was concerned, and that nothing but the entire prostration of the power of one or the other could ensure quiet.

The French, for a time, lost influence at the court of the Deccan, and negotiations were opened with the English at Madras to send troops to protect the capital, Bussy and his French soldiers being at the same time dis-

missed. The English were at this juncture occupied in Bengal in a life or death struggle, and could not make the tempting offer available. The prime-minister of the soubahdar caused the retiring forces of the French to be treacherously waylaid and attacked; but Bussy behaved with such intrepidity and skill, that he resisted all assaults until succours arrived. The soubahdar sued for peace, which was granted at the still further expense of his independence, and Bussy became more potential than ever. The breaking out of war in Bengal caused both parties to send troops in that direction; but the English, still persistently resolved to effect the complete subjugation of Mohammed Ali's dominions, and war having broken out in Europe between England and France, sent a large force to Madura, in the spring of 1757. There Captain Calliaud showed skill and heroism; but he had no battering guns, the place was strong, and before guns arrived, the French marched to Trichinopoly once more, before which they encamped on the 14th of May. The garrison was small, and, besides defending the place, had five hundred French prisoners to guard. Calliaud, active and intelligent, was soon apprised of the danger, and, on the 25th, arrived within nineteen miles of the beleaguered city. For miles his force watched every movement, for the French had denuded all their garrisons, even Pondicherry, in the hope of surprising Trichinopoly. The French had guarded every approach to the city. A plain of seven miles in extent, being an area of rice fields, was deemed impassable, and not guarded. Calliaud advanced towards the city, and made such demonstrations as an officer would have made in order to force one of the strongly-guarded posts; but at night he turned aside, approached the rice swamp, boldly entered it, and brought his tired soldiers safely through, effecting an entrance by daylight into the city. So much was the French general dispirited by this skilful and enterprising movement, that, according to Orme, he the next day retreated to Pondicherry.

Other detachments of the French harassed the country, and burned defenceless towns. The English took reprisals, and sought every opportunity to engage the French in the open field, who, although far the more numerous, declined battle, and maintained a sort of partizan warfare. The English were well handled in the field; but their officers were allowed little discretion by the factors at Madras, and the troops were harassed by orders and counter orders, as the stupidity or fear of the civilians at the presidency dictated.

The year 1757 was one of great activity on the part of the Mahrattas, who demanded



"chout" (tribute) from the Carnatic, and threatened Arcot, so that the nabob had to send his family to Madras for safety. The terrified nabob agreed to pay the chout, and expected the English to find the money out of the unpaid revenues of his own dominions, if they could; but, at all events, he looked to them for the means of redeeming himself from a Mahratta invasion. The English, having no adequate force to bring against the wild horsemen, and unwilling to lose the Carnatic—to the revenues of which, or their share of them, they attributed great prospective value—agreed to pay the stipulated rupees. The brave Calliaud, relieved from the presence of the French at Trichinopoly, again sought to reduce the refractory polygars of Madura and Tinnevely. He besieged Madura, but found it easier to buy his way in, than force his way through the breach. This seems, so far as native spirit was concerned, to have quelled revolt in these districts.

The French were now expecting a grand fleet and vast resources of men and arms from France. On the 8th of September, twelve ships arrived at Pondicherry, landed one thousand men, and returned to the Mauritius. This was not the fleet to which the Franco-Indians looked forward, as destined to sweep away all opposition in the Eastern seas, and to land such forces as would speedily subjugate all Southern India. The reinforcements, which were landed, immediately joined the army in the field, and fort after fort fell to the French, until eight strong places were subdued in the neighbourhood of Chittapet, Trincomalee, and Gingee. The French organized the collectorates of these districts, and received the revenue as if the territory was their own. The Mysoreans invaded the dominions of the nabob, and plundered the country up to the walls of Madura. The English laid an ambush in a narrow pass, and, although the detachment consisted entirely of sepoy, they fell fiercely upon the Mysoreans, inflicting appalling slaughter. This event terminated their incursion. In November the French withdrew their troops into the different forts; but the natives attached to the rival claimants for the nabobship ravaged the entire country—fire, rapine, and blood everywhere indicated the horrors of a war of disputed succession. The year 1757 terminated leaving each party in an expectant attitude; but the French had undoubtedly gained during the struggle in the Carnatic. On the 28th of April, the expected French fleet arrived. It consisted of twelve sail of the line, with a portion of the squadron which had the previous year returned from Pondicherry to Mauritius. This expedition left Brest when a fever raged in that port, and

brought the infection on board, so that three hundred men died on the voyage and many arrived sick; a considerable number dying in the roads of Pondicherry, or in the fort.

With this expedition, there was a body of troops not less than thirteen hundred strong. Most of them were Irish, in the French service—the men who, at Fontenoy, snatched victory from the English in the moment when the beaten French were forsaking the field. Probably no page of history records heroism more gallant and romantic than that which relates the courage displayed by the "Irish Brigades" in the French service, when fighting on the field of Fontenoy; and in the records of few battles is homage to the brave so freely accorded by men of all parties as to the gallant men who were the sole victors of that sanguinary conflict. With these troops was the Count de Lally, an Irishman (or, as some affirm, the son of an Irishman), who had on the field of Fontenoy greatly distinguished himself—so much so, that he was promoted to the rank of colonel by the French king at the close of the battle. Dr. Taylor and Mr. Murray describe him as a man of extraordinary prowess. The former says:—"Upon the breaking out of the war between France and England, in 1756, the French ministry resolved to strike an important blow in India. The Count de Lally was appointed to take the chief command. He was descended from one of the Irish families, which had been compelled to emigrate at the revolution of 1688, in consequence of having adhered to the cause of the Stuarts; and he was therefore animated by a bitter hatred of British ascendancy, which had crushed both his country and his creed. At the battle of Fontenoy he took several English officers prisoners with his own hand, and was raised to the rank of colonel by King Louis himself on the field of battle. He was accompanied to India by his own Irish regiments, composed of the best troops in the service of France, by fifty of the royal artillery, and by several officers of great distinction."

Dr. Taylor, however he may allow his own national predilections to influence his tone in the above paragraph, does not exaggerate the surprising heroism of the count or of his soldiers. The utmost confidence was placed in both by France; and as Lally was entrusted with all the authority previously allowed to Dupleix, it was supposed that the English would be speedily driven out of their long fostered possessions. Lally was not so fortunate as at Fontenoy; and England, whom in his remorseless bigotry he so bitterly hated, was destined to triumph over him on a distant field, and cause the sun of his glory to

set soon and for ever. Lally was not as skilful as he was brave, although he possessed many of the finest intellectual qualities of a good soldier. He was rash, vehement, impatient, tyrannical; he chafed at obstacles, which might have been patiently surmounted had he preserved his temper. A furious religious animosity towards the English, as the chief Protestant nation, blinded his judgment as to present means and probable results, and threw him into acts of precipitancy from which even his great valour and resources in danger could not extricate him.

The Count de Lally was ordered to attack Fort St. David as soon after his arrival as possible. Before communicating with the land, he caused his ships to take up positions against that place, and at once make hostile demonstrations, while he landed his troops at Pondicherry. Then, with a dispatch previously unknown in Indian warfare, except under Clive, and sometimes under Lawrence, he landed his Irish regiments, and an equal number of sepoys, and sent them forward at once against St. David's. The portion of the expedition furnished by the garrison of Pondicherry was badly commanded and badly furnished with material. Indeed, he found the garrison at Pondicherry in a wretched condition. A salute was fired with shotted guns, by which the hull and rigging of one of his ships was damaged. Lally complained bitterly of the ignorance and incompetence of the governor and his council, who could give him no information either concerning the place he was about to attack, or the strength of the English on the coast; neither could they furnish his men with good guides, or even sufficient provisions.

The forces arrived before Fort St. David utterly exhausted, and must have famished of hunger had they not laid the country under contribution. Scarcely had the French expedition approached, when the English fleet was descried from the ships in the road. Mill, quoting Lally himself, and Orme, gives the following account of the futile proceedings of both fleets:—"Mr. Pococke, with the ships of war from Bengal, had arrived at Madras on the 21th of February; on the 24th of the following month a squadron of five ships from Bombay had arrived under Admiral Stevens; and on the 17th of April, the whole sailed to the southward, looking out for the French. Having in ten days worked as high to the windward as the head of Ceylon, they stood in again for the coast, which they made, off Negapatnam, on the 28th, and proceeding along shore, discovered the French fleet, at nine the next morning, riding near Cuddalore. The French imme-

diately weighed, and bore down towards Pondicherry, throwing out signals to recall the two ships which had sailed with Lally; and the English admiral gave the signal for chase. The summons for the two ships not being answered, the French fleet stood out to sea, and formed the line of battle. The French consisted of nine sail, the English only of seven. The battle was indecisive; the loss of a few men, with some damage to the ships, being the only result. Both fleets fell considerably to leeward during the engagement; and the French were six days in working up to the road of Pondicherry, where the troops were landed. Lally himself had some days before proceeded to Fort St. David with the whole force of Pondicherry, and the troops from the fleet were sent after him, as fast as they came on shore."

Meanwhile, matters on shore tried the skill and energy of Lally to the utmost. In order to procure attendants on his army, and as the president and council could not give him a sufficient number of men of low caste, he impressed men of all castes indiscriminately, causing consternation and rage everywhere; he was from that hour hated and distrusted by the natives. Lally became as much an object of hatred to the French as to the natives. He was instructed by the company to regard them rather in the light of unprincipled speculators, so that he arrived with a prejudice against them:—"As the troubles in India have been the source of fortunes, rapid and vast, to a great number of individuals, the same system always reigns at Pondicherry, where those who have not yet made their fortune hope to make it by the same means; and those who have already dissipated it, hope to make it a second time. The *Sieur de Lally* will have an arduous task to eradicate that spirit of cupidity; but it would be one of the most important services which he could render to the company." Such were the terms of the instructions he received. The want of means at Pondicherry for any military enterprise, and the tardiness with which all material aid was afforded to him for the reduction of Fort St. David, excited his anger to a vehement degree, so that he abused the French civilians in terms which were more appropriate to the lips of a madman than to those of a governor and commander.

Notwithstanding the impediments presented by the officials at Pondicherry, he was able to bring a force before St. David's superior to that of its defenders. The latter consisted of sixteen hundred natives; three hundred and sixty-nine European soldiers, of whom eighty-three were invalids; and two

hundred and fifty sailors unacquainted with military discipline. Lally brought against this garrison two thousand five hundred European soldiers, exclusive of officers, and an equal force of sepoy.\* The place was soon captured; and the conqueror immediately sent an expedition to Devi-Cotah, which the garrison abandoned. On the 7th of June, he re-entered Pondicherry, and celebrated a *Te Deum* with great ecclesiastical pomp, for Lally was as ardent in religion as in arms.

The English were astounded at so rapid a series of disasters. They called in all their troops from every department of the presidency to strengthen Madras and Trichinopoly. At this juncture, there is every reason to suppose that the English would have lost Madras itself had Lally been supported by the French; but the poverty of the exchequer at Pondicherry, the want of credit with the natives, and the hatred excited among the latter by the new general's tyranny and bigotry, dried up all sources of supply except what came from France; in India the enterprising general lost all hope of material aid, unless it could be supplied by Bussy. Lord Clive, many years after, thus described the condition of affairs at this time:—"M. Lally arrived with a force as threatened not only the destruction of all the settlements there, but of all the East India Company's possessions, and nothing saved Madras from sharing the fate of Fort St. David, at that time, but their want of money, which gave time for strengthening and reinforcing the place."

A letter written by Lally himself from Fort St. David, after the capture, to the president and council of Pondicherry, presents the poverty of French resources, and the disunion between him and the French civilians, in a light sufficiently clear to explain why Madras itself did not fall:—"This letter shall be an eternal secret between you, sir, and me, if you afford me the means of accomplishing my enterprise. I left you 100,000 livres of my own money to aid you in providing the funds which it requires. I found not, upon my arrival, in your purse, and in that of your whole council, the resource of 100 pence. You, as well as they, have refused me the support of your credit. Yet I imagine you are all of you more indebted to the company than I am. If you continue to leave me in want of everything, and exposed to contend with universal disaffection, not only shall I inform the king and the company of the warm zeal which their servants here display for their interest, but I shall take effectual measures for not depending, during the short stay I wish to make in this

country, on the party spirit and the personal views with which I perceive that every member appears occupied, to the total hazard of the company."

Bussy had in the meantime carried on a series of intrigues in the metropolis of the Deccan, worthy of his own reputation for energy and ability, and of that of his preceptor, Dupleix, for the like qualities. A series of revolutions occurred at the court of the viceroy as rapid as the shocks of an earthquake. Again and again the interests of France and the influence of Bussy were all but destroyed, but from the ruins of each successive catastrophe, the genius of Bussy rescued his country's influence, and even increased it by the very means adopted for its destruction. Lally had the infatuation to order Bussy away from the court of the soubahdar, and treated his statements as to the interests involved as pretences. The mind of Lally could not comprehend the subtle, complicated, and extended schemes of Bussy. The latter, on being treated as an impostor, joined the rest of his countrymen in hatred against the hot-headed innovator. Thus situated, the first resolution of the victorious commander was to attack Madras, carry it rapidly at any sacrifice, and obtain therefrom the accumulations of English industry,—those supplies which he so much required. The naval commander was, however, afraid of the English sailors, and would not even sail in the direction of Madras, to observe the enemy. He sailed south, under the pretence of intercepting English merchant vessels, but really in the hope of keeping out of harm's way. A large body of troops placed on board were thus kept idle, and drawn away from the French army at St. David's. Had these soldiers been from the Irish instead of the French portion of the force, they would probably, from their devotion to their general, have mutinied against the admiral. The latter succeeded in cruising about in such a way as to avoid the English, and Lally, unable to secure his co-operation, was obliged to adopt another project to gain supplies, and extend French influence. The rejected claimant of the throne of Tanjore had been held by the English as a prisoner at Fort St. David, and Lally conceived the idea of using this personage for the purpose of getting money from that country, the reigning rajah of which had formerly given a bond of 5,600,000 rupees to the French, to prevent their attacking his dominions. A demand was made for the money; the rajah did not possess the means of payment, and the French proceeded to dethrone him in favour of the prisoner at Fort St. David,

\* Orme.

who would levy it on the inhabitants, with French assistance. On the 18th of June, 1758, Lally marched at the head of his disposable forces against Tanjore. In seven days the army arrived at Carical, the natives everywhere hiding their provisions, and showing the utmost hatred to the general. His own people rendered all support unwillingly; the troops suffered from fatigue and hunger, which the Irish bore even cheerfully, but the French and sepoy were discontented and murmured. A messenger from the Tanjore monarch arrived to treat, but the general would listen to no parley; either the bond must be paid, or he would seize its equivalent, and that of all further expenses incurred. He proceeded to the wealthy town of Nagpore, which he entered, no resistance being offered, but the rich natives had fled, and there was very little property left behind.

He next arrived at Kineloor, where a pagoda stood of great celebrity. He plundered it. Supposing the idols to be gold, he carried them away; they proved to be brass, but the effect upon the natives was the same as if they had been of the precious metal. He dug down to the foundations of the temple, swept all the tanks, and treated the property of the unoffending and defenceless with barbarity. Six Brahmins lingering about the camp, in the hope of obtaining their gods, he seized, denounced as spies, and blew them away from guns.

His track to the capital, where he arrived on the 18th of July, was marked by devastation. The king offered a treaty. Lally's demands, both in their nature and mode, were imprudent, and violated the most obvious religious scruples of the natives. Bigoted himself to the last degree, ready to resent the smallest indignity to his religion with fire and sword, he had no respect or consideration for the religious feelings of others. In civil and religious matters he was alike a tyrant, but he had the faculty, not only of ruling military bodies, but of attaching them to him. This was especially the case with his own Irish soldiers, who followed him with a contempt of danger, and a desperate courage which rivalled even his own, although he was reputed to be the bravest man in France.

The bombardment of the rajah's stronghold promptly followed the failure of negotiation which the king renewed under the cannonade, but attempting to trick Lally, as all oriental princes would at all risks, that officer vowed he would send him and his family as slaves to the Mauritius. The rajah, determined to resist, every feeling of his nature having been outraged by successive insults the most galling to a Hindoo imagi-

nation. He appealed to the English. Captain Calliaud had sent him a small detachment of sepoy from Trichinopoly, being afraid if he sent European troops, that the rajah might regard them simply as means of effecting an accommodation, and betray them into the hands of the enemy. Calliaud sent another and stronger detachment. The bombardment continued until the 7th of August, when a breach was effected. At that time, Lally had only two days' supply of food in his camp, and hardly one day's supply of ammunition. In that conjuncture of affairs, the English fleet arrived before Carical, the only place from which Lally had obtained supplies. During the siege, the two fleets had met, and fought, the English gaining a victory: this Lally also learned, and there now appeared no hope for the French, unless in an immediate assault. Lally called a council of war, two officers were for the assault, of which he was not one; the other thirteen counselled him to raise the siege. They began their retreat next day, but before putting that movement into execution, the besieged garrison sallied out, and partly effected a surprise, placing the French army in imminent danger. As it was necessary for the English fleet to keep on the *qui vive* for the beaten but not extinguished French squadrons, Lally hoped to reach Carical before the English would venture to land a force there. In this, he was successful, but when he saw the powerful navy of England riding in the offing, his hope failed, although his courage could not fail, and his rage against the hated English broke forth in torrents of furious and almost frenzied passion.

Lally soon saw that the entire evacuation of Tanjore and its neighbourhood was essential to the safety of the French. Their fleets were fugitive. The Mahrattas, at the instigation of the English, threatened that they would invade the French territory if Lally and his forces did not retire from that of Tanjore; and the civilians of Pondicherry urged his return, as twelve hundred English menaced even the seat of the presidency. Lally had not head for such sudden changes and complicated transactions, and he was bewildered and depressed, while the wants of his brave and patient, but harassed army, were as unprovided for as ever. The movements of the two fleets were uncertain, and their tactics at times unaccountable, both were the victims of the weather. The French had the best ships, the English the best men, and the more nautical skill. Most of the English ships were badly built, and in action the French, knowing that the chances were they would have to retreat, principally

fired into the English rigging to disable pursuit; while the English, firing at the hulls, and sweeping the decks, inflicted more serious and permanent damage, even when flight was not prevented, and killed and disabled a far greater number of men. The proceedings of the different squadrons are differently related by French and English authors, and the contradictions occurring in their relations, render it next to impossible to reconcile them. Mill's account is the clearest; he in the main gives the relation of Orme, with such modifications as information subsequently coming to light enabled him to supply. He thus describes what took place at sea:—

“After the first of the naval engagements, the English fleet, before they could anchor, were carried a league to the north of Sadras; the French, which had suffered less in the rigging, and sailed better, anchored fifteen miles to the windward. The English, as soon as possible, weighed again, and after a fruitless endeavour to reach Fort St. David, discovered the French fleet on the 28th of May in the road of Pondicherry. The next day, the French, at the remonstrance of Lally, who sent on board a considerable body of troops, got under sail; but instead of bearing down on the English, unable to advance against the wind, proceeded to Fort St. David, where they arrived on the evening after the surrender. The English sailing badly, fell to leeward as far as Alamparva, where intelligence was received of the loss of the fort. The admiral, therefore, not having water on board for the consumption of five days, made sail, and anchored the next day in the roads of Madras. The fleet had numerous wants; Madras had very scanty means of supply; and nearly eight weeks elapsed before it was again ready for sea. On the 3rd of July, three of the company's ships arrived from Bengal, with money, merchandise, and stores, but no troops. The monsoon had obliged them to make the outward passage towards the Acheen, and they came in from the southward. The French admiral, after touching at Fort St. David, had stood to the southward, to cruise off Ceylon; in opposition to remonstrances of Lally, who desired the fleet to co-operate in the destined enterprise against Madras. Lally hastened from Fort St. David to Pondicherry, and summoned a council by whose authority he recalled the fleet. The injunction reached the admiral at Carical on the 16th of June, and he anchored the next day in the road of Pondicherry. Had he continued his destined course to the southward, he could not have missed the three English East Indiamen from Bengal, and by their

capture would have obtained that treasure, the want of which alone disconcerted the scheme of English destruction. On the 25th of July, the English fleet were again under sail; and on the 27th appeared before Pondicherry, where the French lay at anchor. They put to sea without delay: but the difficulties of the navigation, and the aims of the commanders, made it the 2nd of August before the fleets encountered off Carical. The French line consisted of eight sail; the English, as before, of seven. The fight lasted scarcely an hour; when three of the French ships, being driven out of the line, the whole bore away, under all the sail they could carry. The English admiral gave chase; but in less than ten minutes the enemy were beyond the distance of certain shot. Toward night the English gave over the pursuit, and came to anchor off Carical. The French steered for Pondicherry, when the admiral declared his intention of returning to Mauritius. Lally sent forward the Count d'Estaing to remonstrate with him on the disgrace of quitting the sea before an inferior enemy, and to urge him to renewed operations. D'Estaing offered to accompany him on board, with any proportion of the troops. Lally himself moved with the army from Carical on the 24th of August, and, having passed the Colaroone, hurried on with a small detachment to Pondicherry, where he arrived on the 28th. He immediately summoned a mixed council of the administration and the army, who joined in a fresh expostulation to the admiral on the necessity of repairing to Madras, where the success of an attack must altogether depend upon the union of the naval and military operations. That commander, representing his ships as in a state of the greatest disablement, and his crews extremely enfeebled and diminished by disease, would yield to no persuasion, and set sail with his whole fleet for Mauritius on the 2nd of September.

“If we trust to the declaration of Lally, his intention of besieging Madras, still more his hopes of taking it, were abandoned from that hour. Before the fleet departed, an expedition against Arcot, with a view to relieve the cruel pressure of those pecuniary wants which the disastrous result of the expeditions to Tanjore had only augmented, was projected and prepared.”

Disconcerted although Lally was, and exhausted as were his means, his expedition against Arcot was conducted with extraordinary energy, dispatch, hardihood, and success. His Irish legion performed prodigies of valour, Lally himself ever foremost in the path of danger. The native enemy melted away

before their furious valour. Fort after fort fell. Every task was executed both by the general and troops with masterly ability, yet strategists affirm that the French commander failed in not cutting off supplies from Madras, which should have been a part of his scheme, and was practicable, as these critics allege. At all events, on the 4th of October, 1758, Lally, "on the terms of a pretended capitulation, amid the thunder of cannon, made his entrance into Arcot."\*

The grand error in Lally's campaign was the neglect of Chingleput, which he might have captured without resistance, so great was the consternation into which the garrison was thrown by his triumphant course. This fortress covered the conveyance of supplies to Madras, and as soon as the English recovered from the temporary panic inspired by Lally's rapid and brilliant career, they strengthened the place in every way their means allowed, and resolved to defend it, if Lally's eyes being opened as to its importance, he should venture to assail it. While the French, or Irish commander, as he may with more strict propriety be called, sped as a fiery meteor over the country, a naval reinforcement arrived from England, conveying eight hundred and fifty royal troops, commanded by Colonel Draper. The brave and wise Caillaud, with his European troops, were recalled from Trichinopoly, and Chingleput was powerfully reinforced.

Lally, who declared that he never lost sight of Chingleput, but had comprised its capture in his plans, wrote from Arcot to Pondicherry for money to pay his troops and find means for carrying them against that place; but the council had no money, and the general was obliged to put his troops into cantonments, and hasten to Pondicherry himself, if possible to set things there in better order. The celebrated Bussy would have been a far more likely man to remove the disorder of that capital; he had just joined his superior as the latter entered Arcot in triumph. Instead of harmonious action between these two important men, crimination and recrimination occurred upon their meeting. Lally, who was a man of honest and transparent mind, accused the wily diplomatist of a tortuous and fraudulent policy dishonouring to France. Bussy, without being more frank than wise, soon caused his master to understand that the lesser magnate considered him impolitic, precipitate, rash, and without a plan which, by its comprehensiveness, consecutiveness, and harmony would bring all his power to bear against the English. The sieur believed that by a bold, daring, onward warfare,

\* Mill, lib. iv. cap. iv. p. 163.

the peninsula might soon be cleared of them; his men, he believed, could do it, if ammunition, food, and the sinews of war were provided. Bussy doubted if the English were a people to be removed in a hurry, as Lally might have known from the experience of his ancestors in Ireland; and Bussy also thought that money and power might both be had, if the means taken to obtain them were well chosen, and used with caution as well as courage. Another general of reputed ability, who had been appointed by Lally governor of Masulipatam, Morasin, also joined the conference. Lally urged these officers to raise money on their personal credit, which the conduct of Lally himself had rendered impossible. Bussy urged the consolidation of conquest, and the exercise of French power at the court of the Deccan, as much more important than the influence of the English with the inferior and subsidiary court of the Carnatic. It was to no purpose that reasons the most convincing were urged for such a course; Lally could see no object but one—the removal of the hated English from India, and war against them everywhere; and there is no doubt his views were popular with his Irish soldiery. The French officers were in favour of the plans of Bussy, and wished him to supersede Lally in rank and authority. The council at Pondicherry declared that they had no means to support the army. The officers urged an attempt to take Madras. Lally had no means for a siege. Count D'Estaing, one of the bravest soldiers in the French army, exclaimed in a council of war: "Better to die under the walls of Madras, than of hunger in Pondicherry." Lally himself hoped to pillage the black town, and thus supported, shut up the English in Fort St. George. He advanced his own money, 60,000 rupees, and prevailed upon various Frenchmen in Pondicherry to advance more, which barely exceeded half of his own contributions. With these means, he equipped a little army of about seven thousand men, of whom about two thousand seven hundred were French and Irish, and proceeded against Madras. He was ready to march by the first week in November, but the weather detained him six weeks, and his resources were being rapidly consumed, and he was then reduced to barely a week's supply.

The English prepared themselves against the danger which impended. Admiral Pococke landed his marines at Madras. A body of native cavalry, and the sepoys which had been part of the garrison of Trichinopoly, were posted so as to command the line of the French convoys. Lawrence, who had before been a victor so often, commanded the army,

which encamped on an elevated spot near the city. Governor Pigot commanded the fort, a man unsuitable for any military purpose, although shrewd, sensible, and with much capacity for business. The military in the fort consisted of seventeen hundred and fifty-eight Europeans, two thousand two hundred and twenty sepoy, and two hundred of the nabob's horsemen, who were of little value. There were one hundred and fifty Europeans, who acted as civil auxiliaries.

On the 12th of December Lally attacked Lawrence's outposts, who fought and fell back. Lally pressed upon him with impetuosity, and Lawrence sought shelter in the fort. The count reconnoitred all day on the 13th. On the 14th, he realized his purpose of capturing the black town, which was pillaged. The Irish soldiery became intoxicated. The English, acquainted with the fact, sallied out to the number of six hundred men, who were selected for their bravery and efficiency. These troops fell upon the revellers, and slew many; but although most were drunk, and all in great disorder, they proved much more formidable enemies than their French colleagues; they did not give way, but fought in scattered groups with undaunted bravery and determination, until two hundred of the English, who also fought with obstinate valour, lay dead in the streets. The remainder retreated, before Lally's soldiers could form. Bussy, instead of intercepting the fugitives, refused to act, or allow his officers to act, on the ground that he was without orders and without cannon,—an absurd pretext, for the English were driven back without cannon and without orders, and Bussy could have intercepted them had he as much spirit as his officers. Probably the want of cordiality between him and Lally accounted for it, and it may be that the feeling extended to Bussy's followers; for on Aughrim, Fontenoy, and other fields, where they fought side by side, the French evinced much jealousy of their Irish auxiliaries.

Lally having obtained money from some merchants who were resident in the black town, opened his batteries, as he himself alleged afterwards, without hope of capture, but with the intention to bombard. While the count was thus proceeding a million of livres arrived at Pondicherry, and with the funds thus placed at his disposal, he made regular siege, with the hope of subduing the fort before the English fleet, expected back in January, should arrive. With disadvantages, such as would have deterred any other man then living, unless Clive, and with nothing to encourage him but the heroism and noble devotion of his own Irish soldiers, and a few of the common soldiers

among the French and the sepoy, this dauntless man persevered. Mill did him and his poor soldiers no more than justice when he wrote the following account, which unites a fulness and a brevity not to be met with in any other record of these transactions:—  
“ With only two engineers, and three artillery officers, excepting the few who belonged to the company, all deficient both in knowledge and enterprise; with officers in general dissatisfied and ill-disposed, with only the common men on whom he could depend, and of whose alacrity he never had reason to complain, he carried on the siege with a vigour and activity which commanded the respect even of the besieged, though they were little acquainted with the difficulties under which he toiled. By means of the supplies which had plentifully arrived from Bengal, and the time which the presidency had enjoyed to make preparation for siege, the English were supplied with an abundance both of money and of stores. The resolution to defend themselves to the utmost extremity, which has seldom been shared more universally and cordially by any body of men, inspired them with incessant vigilance and activity. The industry of the enemy was perpetually counteracted by a similar industry on the part of their opponents. No sooner had those without erected a work, than the most active, and enterprising, and often skilful exertions were made from within to destroy it. Whatever ingenuity the enemy employed in devising measures of attack, was speedily discovered by the keen and watchful eyes of the defenders. A breach, in spite of all those exertions, was, however, effected; and the mind of Lally was intensely engaged with preparations for the assault; when he found the officers of his army altogether indisposed to second his ardour. Mr. Orme declares his opinion that their objections were founded on real and prudential considerations, and that an attempt to storm the place would have been attended with repulse and disaster. Lally, however, says that the most odious intrigues were carried on in the army, and groundless apprehensions were propagated, to shake the resolution of the soldiers, and prevent the execution of the plan: that the situation of the general was thus rendered critical in the highest degree, and the chance of success exceedingly diminished; yet he still adhered to his design, and only waited for the setting of the moon, which in India sheds a light not much feeblener than that of a winter sun, on the very day on which an English fleet of six sail arrived at Madras. The fleet under Admiral Pococke, which had left Madras on the 11th of October, had arrived at Bombay on the 10th of Decem-

ber, where they found six of the company's ships, and two ships of the line, with six hundred of the king's troops on board. On the 31st of December the company's ships, with all the troops, sailed from Bombay, under the convoy of two frigates, and arrived on the 16th of February, at a critical moment, at Madras. 'Words,' says Lally, 'are inadequate to express the effect which the appearance of them produced. The officer who commanded in the trenches deemed it even inexpedient to wait for the landing of the enemy, and two hours before receiving orders retired from his post.' Lally was now constrained to abandon the siege. The officers and soldiers had been on no more than half pay during the first six weeks of the expedition, and entirely destitute of pay during the remaining three. The expenses of the siege and the half pay had consumed, during the first month, the million livres which had arrived from the islands. The officers were on the allowance of the soldiers. The subsistence of the army for the last fifteen days had depended almost entirely upon some rice and butter, captured in two small vessels from Bengal. A very small quantity of gunpowder remained in the camp; and not a larger at Pondicherry. The bombs were wholly consumed three weeks before. The sepoys deserted for want of pay, and the European cavalry threatened every hour to go over to the enemy."

It is probable that but for the personal attachment of his own soldiers of the Irish brigade the French would have seized Lally, and given Bussy the command. On the night of the 17th the army broke up from before Madras, and made good their retreat. The English seem to have been so awed by the bravery and military capacity of Lally, and a portion of his troops, that they instituted no pursuit. Considering the superior force, equipment, and resources of the English at Madras, when the siege was raised, it was much to their dishonour that a hot and unrelenting pursuit was not adopted. The tidings of Lally's misfortunes at Madras arrived in Pondicherry before him, and were hailed with transports of joy, alike by French and natives, so completely had the bigotry and self-will of the governor counteracted the bravery, talent, and glory of the soldier. When he arrived at Pondicherry, if the joy at his ill success were less openly expressed, it was not less hearty.

Mohammed Ali, the actual nabob of the Carnatic, the *protégé* of the English, had proved himself a costly ally. He had, however, been true to English interests, and their honour and policy was to support him. His two brothers, who had been instigated by the

French, and who had so often sought French help, now, in the hour of adversity, betrayed them. One of the brothers actually assassinated all the French in his service, except a single officer, justifying the apprehensions entertained by Calliaud, recorded in a former page, when urged to send British troops to the assistance of the nabob himself. The native princes were entirely without faith, honour, or principle, and no confidence could be reposed in them, however gratitude or oaths might be expected to bind them to their engagements, or even to the observance of hospitality, justice, and mercy. The English were most anxious to recover the province, and prepared an expedition, but their funds had been so heavily drawn upon, that they were unable to take the field until the 6th of March, when a force, consisting of 1156 Europeans, 1570 sepoys, 1120 collierees (regular troops), and 1956 horse, was fully equipped for a campaign.

Besides this force, a native chief with a body of sepoys was sent to the countries of Tinnevely and Madura. When the troops had been withdrawn for the defence of Madras, Madura and Palam Cotah were attacked by the native chiefs; but the sepoys, who constituted the garrison, remained faithful, and drove them off.

When the army of Lally retreated from Madras, only a portion entered Pondicherry; another division marched to Congeveram, where the two armies remained in hostile array for three weeks, neither feeling strong enough to act upon the offensive. The English drew off to Wandiwash, took the town, and were preparing to open trenches against the fort, when the French moved from Congeveram to its relief. This was the expectation of the English, and, acting boldly and promptly upon the design previously formed, they turned, by a forced march, reached Congeveram, assaulted and captured it. The two armies watched one another, without giving battle, until the 28th of May, when both went into cantonments.

While these events were passing, the fleets were occupied by measures of usefulness. On the 29th of April, Admiral Pococke arrived from the western coast of India, and cruised about, watching for French ships. About a month after the armies went into cantonments, the company's usual ships arrived at Madras, and brought one hundred soldiers for the service of the country, and announced that royal troops, in considerable numbers, might soon be expected. At the same time, it was announced that no treasure would arrive until 1760, tidings which dispirited the council, but which they did not then permit to transpire beyond the council chamber. In another



month, five ships arrived at Negapatnam with a portion of the expected troops, and, having landed stores and munitions, sailed for Madras.

On the 20th of August the French squadron sailed for the neighbourhood of Trincomalee, in the Island of Ceylon, where the fleet was reinforced by three new ships from France. On the 10th of September, the weather allowed the two navies to operate, and the English, having the wind, came down abreast, while the French lay-to in line of battle. The superiority of the French fleet was very great: they had eleven sail of the line and three frigates. The English had but nine sail of the line, one frigate, a fire-ship, and two of the company's traders. The superiority in guns on the part of the French was one hundred and seventy-four. The battle lasted but two hours, when the French line was broken, and made all sail out of the engagement. As usual, the English had suffered chiefly in the rigging, and could not follow. A pursuit of ten minutes proved that if the English had the best of the battle, the French were more skilful in making out of it. The loss of men was about equal; but the French ships were severely hulled, but suffered little in the rigging. The English next day entered the port of Negapatnam: the French, in four days, reached Pondicherry. Great was the distress of the people there, when a beaten fleet sought shelter, which they hoped would bring them the means of victory and large supplies. The disappointment and discontent spread wherever the French troops were quartered. The Irish brigade had received no pay for a long time—they had "borne the burning and heat of the day"—they had accomplished more in battle than the whole of the French troops besides—they alone had encountered with success the English; yet the limited funds of the presidency had been employed in recruiting and drilling sepoy, who ran away, and in supporting the civilians, French officers, and French troops, while Lally's own regiment was, like Lally himself, treated with something like hostility. In the hour of danger they were relied upon, and French compliment was lavished, to stimulate them, while, as at Madras, the toil of labour and battle were borne by them, and they were left to starve, unable to obtain either rations or their pay to procure them. Their long-enduring patience at last gave way: they mutinied, and the whole French army became disorganized. This corps had been regarded in India with the prestige it had acquired in France, and looked up to not only as the most chivalrous in battle, but the best disciplined; now their disobedience shook the loyalty of

every other corps.\* But, although Lally's regiment mutinied under the pressure of hunger, and because they believed that their general and themselves were the objects of an invidious feeling, this did not hinder their usual aptitude in arms, as they soon proved in an action of great importance at Wandiwash.

Coote had not yet arrived, and the officer who was next in command, was Major Brereton. He was extremely solicitous to perform some brilliant deed, while the chance of commanding in chief remained with him. He accordingly induced the council of Madras to consent to his leading a force against Wandiwash. The whole army accordingly marched from Congeveram on the 26th of September. The two forces now in front of one another were very formidable, comprising the chief strength of each, but the English were far superior in *materiel* and equipment, while they were also well supplied with provisions. The French were deficient in every requisite. The English attacked the place on the night of the 29th, they came on with great gallantry, and they were received with equal spirit. It does not appear that the native auxiliaries on either side were of much use. The English passed through a terrible fire, and with the most audacious courage bore down all opposition; it so happened that at Wandiwash, as at Madras, they were once more brought into fierce conflict with their own fellow-subjects, who constituted Lally's corps, a sanguinary conflict ensued, and the English sustained a terrible defeat, leaving more than two hundred men dead, or in the hands of the victors. The repulse they experienced seems to have much injured the *morale* of the force, Mr. Mill relates the following anecdote, illustrative of the fact:—"In this action a detachment of grenadiers were very expeditiously quitting the vicinity of danger; when their officer, instead of calling after them, an imprudence which would, in all probability, have converted their retreat into a flight, ran till he got before them, and then, turning suddenly round, said, 'Halt,' as giving the ordinary word of command. The habit of discipline prevailed. The men stopped, formed according to orders, and marched back into the scene of action. But this success of the French, however brilliant,

\* The first troops of the brigade were generally regarded in France as much better on the field of battle than anywhere else, and soon after they gained for France the far-famed field of Fontenoy, many complaints were urged as to their free way of living in quarters and their addictions to duels. The king pointed out the fact of these complaints to their general, exclaiming, "My Irish troops give me more trouble than all the rest of my army." "Sire," was the gallant and witty reply, "your majesty's enemies say the same thing."

neither clothed the men nor supplied them with provisions."

The state of affairs which ensued upon the French victory of Wandiwash, was, on the whole, unfavourable to France. A signal victory was gained without producing any moral influence among natives in favour of the French, for it was mainly to the valour of Lally's corps that the triumph was attributable, and the natives could not see any difference between Irishmen and Englishmen, and supposed that Lally's people were influenced by no principle in serving the French, but were mercenary soldiers who ought to have been on the other side. The natives did not fail to observe that, whenever the French and English met, unless the soldiers of Lally bore the brunt of the battle, the French were beaten; so that the English got the moral credit of the heroism of Lally's soldiers, and although they were defeated, still it was a battle lost to their own countrymen, and in the opinion of the natives redounded to English honour. The feeling became general throughout the Carnatic, and in other portions of the Deccan was rapidly making progress, that the French, however invincible to natives, were not as good soldiers as the British, and must finally give place to them. In various ways, such a feeling proved disadvantageous to the French, depriving them of native support. If the French lost a battle the English of course got the glory; if the French won one where the Irish brigade formed part of their army, the victory was attributed to the brigade, and the British had the glory again, even although they experienced repulse. The French were in a false position, and lost moral power day by day.

The removal of Bussy from the court of the Deccan left the French protégé, the viceroy, unable to cope with his ambitious rivals. A revolution broke out, and French influence then, deprived of the expert diplomacy of Bussy, melted away.

The general state of affairs at this juncture, as affected the French favourably and unfavourably, is voluminously presented by the great English historian of the time, Orme, and by Lally after his return to France. Mr. Mill collated these accounts, and thus gives the result:—"Neither the English nor the French had ever been able to draw from the districts which they held in the country, sufficient funds to defray the expense of the troops, employed in conquering and defending them. A considerable portion of those districts, which the French had been able to seize upon the arrival of Lally, the English had again recovered. The government of Pondicherry, left almost wholly destitute of

supplies from Europe, was utterly exhausted, first, by the long and desperate struggle in which they had been engaged; and secondly (for the truth must not be disguised, though the complaints of Lally have long been treated with ridicule), by the misapplication of the public funds: a calamity of which the violent passion of individuals for private wealth was a copious and perennial fountain. Lally had, from his first arrival, been struggling on the borders of despair, with wants which it was altogether out of his power to supply. The English had received, or were about to receive, the most important accession to their power. And nothing but the fleet, which had now arrived, and the supplies which it might have brought, could enable him much longer to contend with the difficulties which environed him.

"M. d'Aché had brought, for the use of the colony, £16,000 in dollars, with a quantity of diamonds, valued at £17,000, which had been taken in an English East Indiaman; and, having landed these effects, together with one hundred and eighty men, he declared his resolution of sailing again immediately for the islands. Nothing could exceed the surprise and consternation of the colony, upon this unexpected and alarming intelligence. Even those who were the most indifferent to the success of affairs, when the reputation of Lally, and the interest of their country alone were at stake, now began to tremble, when the very existence of the colony, and their interests along with it, were threatened with inevitable destruction. All the principal inhabitants, civil and military, assembled at the governor's house, and formed themselves into a national council. A vehement protest was signed against the departure of the fleet. But the resolution of the admiral was inflexible; and he could only be induced to leave four hundred Caffres, who served in the fleet, and five hundred Europeans, partly marines and partly sailors.

"At the same time the departure of Bussy had been attended, in the dominions of the soubahdar, with a rapid succession of events, ruinous to the interests of the French. An expedition from Bengal, fitted out by the English against the northern Circars, those important districts of which Bussy had obtained the dominion from Salabat Jung, had been attended with the most brilliant success; had not only driven the French entirely out of the country, but had compelled the soubahdar to solicit a connection with the English."

Bussy, however, continued to open communications with the revolutionists of the Deccan; and, with a perfidy only to be surpassed by Dupleix, finding his former pro-

tégé the weaker, entreated the count to side with the revolvers. Lally was a straightforward, honest man, who detested Bussy and his intrigues, and liked to adjust political differences by honest treaty, or downright hard fighting. He did not comprehend the arguments of his lieutenant, admitted that he had no knowledge of the politics of the Deccan, but began to see the importance in relation to the English of holding power with the viceroy, to whom the nabob of the Carnatic, the protégé of the English, owed allegiance. Lally permitted his minister to act as he pleased, and his first act was to declare Salabat Jung Nabob of the Carnatic. This pretender had raised an army, and had the support of the revolutionary power in the Deccan. The sieur confided to Bussy a body of troops to march to the assistance of the pretender, then directing his course upon Vellore. Bussy arrived at Wandiwash the day after the English suffered the reverse at that place, to take thence a portion of the troops upon his new enterprise. The French army, which was suffering extreme privations, at once burst into general mutiny. They believed that the admiral had left plenty of money at Pondicherry, and that the civilians had squandered it. The civilians did squander from time to time very much, and the chief cause of their hatred to Lally was his incorruptibility, and determination to check their corruption. On the 16th of October, the officers were deprived of all authority. Bussy had by that time, through his extraordinary address, led his division to Arcot, when hearing of the still further proceedings of the mutinous army which he had left behind, he halted. The French soldiers were, however, pacified by six months' pay, and a general amnesty. But the pretender to the nabobship had exhausted his resources, was observed by an English corps, and was solicited to give up his alliance with Bussy, by Nizam Ali, the chief of the successful revolutionary party in the Deccan, and then the ostensible viceroy. The negotiation between the pretender to the Carnatic and Bussy was broken off. The latter continued somehow to support his troops, and to increase his division by four hundred superior horsemen of the Deccan. Lally, no longer able to feed his army, was obliged to separate it into two divisions, and send each in a different direction to collect the rents, and assert generally the sovereignty of those districts. This was perilous in the presence of so great a force as the English now possessed, but all parties agreed that there was nothing else which could be done, and preserve the soldiers alive.

On the 20th of November, the division which took the southern direction seized upon

the island of Seringham, the garrison of Trichinopoly being too weak to offer resistance. Unfortunately for Lally, Colonel Coote, with the remainder of his force, had landed a few weeks before, and, on the 21st of November, reached Congeveram, where the English troops were cantoned. He pretended to concentrate his attention on Arcot, and deceived the French, threw them off their guard at Wandiwash, and then, suddenly assaulting that place, carried it on the 29th. This gallant *coup* of Coote compelled Lally to abandon Seringham for the defence of Arcot. He was joined by Bussy, with the force at the head of which he had been fruitlessly wandering about, for the first time in his Indian experience. Bussy recommended a cunning and effectual course of strategy to his chief—that of using his superiority of cavalry to act upon the English communications. Lally found that the temper of his Irish soldiers would not be satisfied with expeditions which only harassed the enemy, and that some bold exploit—some obvious and tangible advantage, was necessary to satisfy their daring enterprise and their protracted disappointments. Bussy's plan was the best in itself, but was unsuited to the condition of the troops. The count, anxious to secure food and ammunition, by clever stratagem diverted the attention of the English, and seized Congeveram, where he found nothing of importance. The English were fed by paying ready money daily at a high rate to the country people, who, finding them to be good customers, provided them with supplies; but Bussy's Mahratta horsemen often interfered with these operations, to the injury and embarrassment of the British. Lally next attempted the recapture of Wandiwash. Surprise was impossible: he laid siege to the place: but his genius was baffled by the professional etiquette of the engineers, who insisted upon carrying on the siege according to established rules, instead of obeying the orders of their chief, whose keen military eye saw that such rules were unnecessary in the case. Before he could do anything, a superior English army came to raise the siege. Bussy advised his superior officer to resort to the stratagem of cutting off the English supplies; but Lally, scorning to retreat, prepared to give battle to the approaching foe. The English manœuvred admirably, and formed their line with one wing in communication with the fort, and resting upon it so as to be covered by its fire. The European force of the French was superior to that of the English, being 2250 against 1900. The native force of the British was the stronger, being 2100 sepoy and 1250 cavalry against 1300 sepoy. The Mahratta horse in the French service would

not approach the field within several miles. The English had twenty-six field pieces, which were admirably officered and manned. Lally's engineers and artillery were inferior: his sole reliance was upon his Irish infantry; although a portion of his French force were cavalry, and from them he also expected some service. These cavalry were the first troops tested, and they behaved basely. The British advanced; and Lally, believing their left wing wavered from the fire of his artillery, which there is good reason for believing was an error, bravely put himself at the head of his horsemen, and ordered a charge; but neither men nor officers would follow him. He suspended the commanding officer, and ordered the next in seniority to take the command: he refused to obey. Lally addressed the men, appealing to their patriotism and courage. A junior officer cried out that it was shame to desert the general in the midst of battle, and this produced the effect. The general led them, however, but a short distance when some artillery fire beginning to take effect, the whole turned and fled, and the intrepid soldier stood alone to dare for France what Frenchmen were unwilling to brave. Lally then brought up his French infantry, who, wretchedly supported by the artillery, and altogether deserted by the cavalry, European and native, saw the hopelessness of success, and fired at random. The English, who perfectly obeyed their orders, were commanded not to fire a shot, but advance steadily, which they did, as if a mass moved by a single will. The infantry on their extreme right being Lally's own, threw themselves into column, and rushed madly forward to meet the English, who were ordered to reserve their fire until the enemy was close. The English receiving the columns in line, the battle assumed a form similar to that of so many of the Duke of Wellington's in recent years: as he said of Waterloo, in his letter to Marshal Beresford—"They came on in the old way, and were beaten off in the old way." The fire of the British line fell with deadly certainty upon the front and flank of their opponents, tearing open the column in a manner the most sanguinary and terrible. Yet these dauntless men, true to Lally when all else forsook him, broke through this terrific fire, and, charging with the bayonet, in the same spirit as the English afterwards became accustomed to do, broke the British line, and, as Mill describes it, "bore down what was opposed to it." Its victory, won so well—and never was victory won more bravely—was of short duration. The French cavalry had galloped off the field; the native cavalry, their allies, had not appeared upon it; the sepoy fired irregularly and at a distance: the handful of heroes of Lally's own

corps was left to do battle with the British army. The English infantry, cavalry, and artillery fell upon their unprotected flanks: yet still they fought until the field was ensanguined with their blood, and the tired remnant were swept before the repeated charges of overwhelming numbers, as the monsoon scatters the surges of the sea. Bussy put himself at the head of the French infantry, and led them to a bayonet charge. His horse was pierced by a British bayonet, and his soldiers forsook him on the field, leaving him a prisoner in the hands of the English. Lally ordered the sepoy to charge: they would not, and soon turned from the field. The Irish suffered dreadfully, and were left alone to combat and to die, winning for themselves an honour scarcely inferior to that of Fontenoy, even in defeat. The sieur acted the part of a skilful general in bringing his beaten army off the field; and the French cavalry, who behaved so cowardly, with the brave remnant of Lally's own regiment, so gallantly covered the retreat, that the army, demoralized although it was, was preserved from annihilation. He even halted at a short distance, the native cavalry in the English service not daring to pursue; and the British infantry, having become exhausted in the conflict, were unequal to a task with which the sepoy could not be entrusted. Lally awaited the junction of his detachment at Wandiwash, and carried off his wounded and his light baggage in the face of his enemy. He then proceeded to Chittapet, and thence to Gingee.

Coote was a brave, cool, and active officer. He did not allow the war to slumber, and sent forward a detachment for the reduction of Arcot. Hearing that the French fort of Chittapet, was almost defenceless, Coote determined to attempt its reduction before besieging Arcot. Both forts were reduced with trifling loss and labour, the enemy offering but a feeble resistance.

Lally withdrew his troops from Gingee to Vellore, lest the English should intercept his communications with Pondicherry, and in order to protect the districts from which he had then any chance of obtaining provisions. Finding that all his attempts to obtain any pecuniary assistance from Pondicherry, or supplies of any kind were unavailing, he proceeded to that place, and stormed with his usual unrestrained passion against the delinquents whom he accused of embezzling the property of the company, and betraying their country. They in return accused him of folly, rashness, incompetency, and to these charges, which might have had some show of reason, except as to any impeachment of incompetency in the field, they added the absurd taunt of cowardice. The result of these

recriminations was to paralyse still further all hope of conducting the war against the English successfully.

The destitution and disorganization of the French army was now fearfully increased, and had the English marched at once boldly upon Pondicherry, it must have fallen; but they were deficient in information, and believing that the resources of the French at Pondicherry were ample, and that in other directions also they exceeded the reality, the policy was adopted of attacking the various minor places in detail, and then of gradually closing upon Pondicherry, and reducing it by blockade. This plan was acted upon with slow, but ultimate success. It would be tedious to recount the various actions which took place, or to give an account of the relative consequence of the successes which the English obtained. M. Auber\* gives the following correct summary, which is, although closely condensed, sufficiently ample for the reader's purpose, possessing the exactness which that writer's peculiar opportunities enabled him to observe:—"The army, after the surrender of Arcot, moved towards Pondicherry, to cut off supplies, while Admiral Cornish blockaded it by sea. The district of Trincomalee was reduced by Captain Smith. On the 5th of March, Permacoil surrendered to Colonel Coote, Carical to Colonel Monson and Admiral Cornish on the 5th of April, and Chellumbrum to Colonel Monson on the 12th. On the same day, Colonel Coote took Waldour, where the camp was formed previously to operations against Pondicherry; for which purpose, a large supply of gunpowder had been sent from Bengal and Bombay, accompanied by three companies of the king's artillery from the latter presidency. The Mahrattas had gained a considerable victory over Salabat Jung, who ceded to them districts of the value of sixty lacs of rupees, and the fort of Dowlatabad, at that time the strongest in the country. M. Bussy and other French prisoners on parole, at Pondicherry, were ordered to Madras, as several of them had borne arms by order of M. Lally. Considerable apprehension being entertained that the Mahrattas would enter the province and demand the *chout*, and, if joined by the Mysoreans and the French, that they would impede the designs against Pondicherry, a member of the council was deputed, for the purpose of inducing them to refrain from advancing towards the Carnatic. In the month of September, the president, Governor Pigot, accompanied by Colonel Coote, visited Admiral Stevens, on board the *Norfolk*, and, after much solicitation, ob-

tained his consent to the marines of the squadron being landed, to aid the troops in preventing supplies being thrown into Pondicherry. During the preparation for attacking Ariancopang, orders were received from Bengal for divesting Colonel Coote of the command, and placing it in the hands of Colonel Monson. The latter officer, in an attack on the enemy's outposts, having had both the bones of his leg broken by a shot, recommended that Colonel Coote should again receive the command. It was some days, however, before Coote would consent to return to the camp, having made preparations to proceed to Bengal. The French blew up Ariancopang, and retreated to Pondicherry. The marines being re-embarked by the desire of Admiral Stevens, he sailed in October with the greater part of his fleet to Trincomalee, leaving five of his ships to prevent the enemy affording aid by sea. The king (as he was then styled) of Mysore having supported the French, a diversion was made into his country, and the fort of Caroor taken by Captain Smith. It was supposed to have been the first instance of any European troops having advanced so far inland westward. The king subsequently addressed letters of friendship to the president, and the nabob of the Carnatic, stating that it was his prime-minister, Hyder Naigue, who had rebelled against him, and sent his troops to assist the French. This appears to have been the first mention of Hyder, who became so formidable an enemy to the company, both in his own person and that of his adopted successor."

By the 1st of May, 1760, the French had lost all their possessions in the Carnatic, except the strong fort of Gingee, and the fort commanding an important pass called Jhiager, and were shut up in Pondicherry, blockaded by land and sea.

Lally had, however, continued to negotiate with the Mysoreans, and they consented to afford him food, munitions of war, and a body of three thousand horse, and five hundred infantry. They falsified all his expectations. They, indeed, advanced their troops, defeating an English detachment in their progress, and encamped near Pondicherry, but finding the affairs of the French desperate, they decamped in the night, after lingering about the place for a month. They were probably influenced by the arrival of six of the company's ships at Madras, with royal troops to the number of six hundred. This was the 2nd of August, Pondicherry having been three months blockaded, and no impression made upon the place. A month later (September 2), several other ships of the company arrived, three ships of war, and a wing of a

\* *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. iii. p. 102.

Highland regiment. The reinforcements of troops had now been considerable, and the fleet consisted of nineteen sail of the line, with one or two frigates, and several lesser ships, besides several heavily armed ships of the company:—"Lally had now, and it is no ordinary praise, during almost eight months since the total discomfiture of his army at Wandiwash, imposed upon the English so much respect, as deterred them from the siege of Pondicherry; and, notwithstanding the desperate state of his resources, found means to supply the fort, which had been totally destitute of provisions, with a stock sufficient to maintain the garrison for several months. And he still resolved to strike a blow which might impress them with an opinion that he was capable of offensive operations of no inconsiderable magnitude. He formed a plan, which has been allowed to indicate both judgment and sagacity, for attacking the English camp by surprise in four places on the night of the 4th of September. But one of the four divisions, into which his army was formed for the execution of the enterprise, fell behind its time, and disconcerted the operations of the remainder."\*

Early in December, the English converted the blockade into a close siege, erecting batteries which fired upon the place, from the end of the first week to the 30th; on that day a tempest of extraordinary violence stranded three of the English ships in the road, and injured almost all the others. The camp also suffered damage, the tents of the soldiers being torn up and driven away, and the ground flooded. It was a storm, which in its intensity and the character of its effects, bore a close resemblance to that which smote the besieging fleets and armies before Sebastopol, on the memorable night of the 14th of November, 1854. As in the latter case, so in the former, the storm and deluge only delayed the siege, the English repaired the damages, and pressed on the works throughout the first days of January. About the 12th of the month, Lally, exhausted with anxiety and fatigue, became ill, and the management of affairs devolved upon the council, which was torn with dissensions. Whatever Lally ordered was disobeyed. The provisions which that general had, with so much talent, energy and self-sacrifice, laid in, were squandered. Lally, perceiving their total want of competency and principle, ordered them to make terms with the besiegers; they deceived him, and went on squandering the means of defence. In the evening of the

14th, a commissioner from Lally, and a deputation from the council, entered the English camp. Lally claimed the benefit of a cartel which had been concluded between the two crowns, and which, the deputation from the council urged, rendered it impossible to propose a capitulation. Coote, who commanded the British, alleging that a dispute being still open as to the meaning and extent of the cartel, he could not recognise it, and would accept nothing but an unconditional surrender. There remained nothing for the French but immediate surrender; they had only two days' provision left, and no proper material of war to resist a siege. The council of Madras levelled the town and fort; all the French were borne away prisoners. Dupleix had boasted that he would serve Madras so, and the council of the presidency determined to make the King of France feel that the retribution was as complete as it was deserved. Theagar and Gingee surrendered almost without resistance, completing the English conquest of the Carnatic.

In the meantime important transactions between the French and English had occurred elsewhere, the result of which, taken with the events in the Carnatic, was that the French had lost all their possessions in India, when Gingee surrendered.

The fate of Lally was sorrowful: when liberated by the English and restored to France, he was cast into the Bastille, thence he was taken to a common prison, accused of high treason, dragged through the streets of Paris in a dung-cart, and then executed,—forming one of the most disgraceful pages of French history. Never was a man more true to France, more loyal to her king, more zealous or honest in the public service of any country. His vices were a hasty temper, a despotic will, religious bigotry, and a hatred to the English, both national and religious, which amounted almost to monomania. His services to France were great; his requital murder, as Orme, the English historian, designated his execution—"a murder committed with the sword of justice:" he might have more properly said, with the sword of law. The French monarch and ministry, anxious to appease the hostility which rose around them, sought and found a noble victim. Lally was subsequently amply avenged. His son was the Lally Tollandal whose eloquence in the constituent assembly contributed so much to destroy the bigoted, tyrannical, sanguinary, and treacherous monarchy of the Bourbons. Thus national, like individual retribution, forms a striking feature in the moral government of the all-wise and just God, whose long suffering and patience hinder not, but illustrate and

\* *History of British India.* By James Mill, Esq., book iv. chap. iv. p. 182.

enforce, the impartial and sure justice of His administration.

The English were now masters of the Carnatic, over which they ruled through their nominee, Mohammed Ali, who had probably the most equitable claim to the title of nabob. The soubahdar of the Deccan, whom the English called viceroy or nizam, professed to be their ally; and although the nabob of the Carnatic was tributary to him, the latter was left wholly under the direction and control of the English. This was the first great war in which the English were engaged in India, and was one so bloody, protracted, and involving such lasting consequences, as to deserve an extended narrative.

It required, however, a few years to consolidate the government of the Carnatic; and during that process, fresh events tended to alter its relations to surrounding territory, and to give the English a still wider preponderance in Southern India, through the necessary effects and sequences of the war in the Carnatic, which they had so successfully waged. The nabob was still disturbed by refractory polygars, and at the same time by intrigues conducted from Mysore by Hyder, who, early in 1766, was in ostensible revolt against his sovereign.\* The English were much occupied in negotiations with the court of the Deccan, and with an expedition to Manilla, which left Madras on the 29th of July, 1762; but still they gave attention to the nabob's affairs, mediated between him and the Mysoreans, and aided in subduing the polygars. At the end of the year 1761 Vellore surrendered to the nabob, which was a source to him of great satisfaction; and during 1762, the most rebellious and powerful of the polygars made submission.

The various parties contending in the Deccan, especially that of Salabat Jung, sought English aid soon after the surrender of the French, offering for it large territorial concessions, which were refused, the council informing the directors, "we are not anxious to grasp more than can be held,"—which showed as much policy as moderation.

In 1764 tidings of peace in Europe between England and France arrived in Madras. The council were as much averse to French settlements in India as ever; alleging, in their correspondence with the directors, that the French could never support settlements by trade; that in order to obtain means to keep up troops and grand establishments, they would be sure to seek territory by means involving all around them in frequent recourse to arms. Governor Pigot had left

for England at the latter end of the previous year; these views he affirmed in London. The successor of Mr. Pigot was of the same mind. French settlements and peace were regarded by the English as not likely to exist long in India together.

In the early part of 1763, the fort of Madras was invested by the British; in October it surrendered to Major Campbell. By this conquest, the nabob was enabled to occupy a strong post in the midst of a large district ruled by insurrectionary polygars. The most important consequence of the conquest of the Carnatic was the acquisition by the English of the Northern Circars. This was, however, not wholly the result of the expulsion of the French from the Carnatic, although chiefly so: the events in Bengal which were occurring at the same time, contributed their quota to the influences which enabled the English to become masters of territory so desirable.

By the treaty of peace, Pondicherry was restored to the French; and M. Law, who had formerly distinguished himself as an opponent of the English, had returned to Pondicherry under that treaty. The English at Madras became alarmed lest he should lay claim to the Northern Circars, which had been conceded to the French in 1657. The territory was of great extent and importance, commanding a vast range on the Coromandel coast, fertile in a considerable portion of its area, and occupied by an industrious population. The French were no sooner settled in Pondicherry, than disputes were raised about the treaty between England and France, and between France and the soubahdar in the Deccan, on the ground of which the French might claim it. The English having expelled the French during the late war, were disposed to stretch to the utmost the rights of their nominee, the Nabob of the Carnatic. The French assumed a tone irritating, consequential, and assuming; they wrote and talked as if they felt it to be their right and duty to resume their old authority—to deprive them of which the war had been waged so fiercely, and they were intent upon pursuing their old courses as far as was possible in their altered circumstances. The council of Madras would have probably held the Circars against their claims upon the nabob for expenses incurred on his account, but the Mah-rattas were now jealous of the rising dominion of the English, and were too powerful for the English to provoke them. It was accordingly proposed to rent the Circars from the nizam (or viceroy) of the Deccan, in order to prevent the claims of the French. The nizam was willing to cede the territory; but the English, doubtful of his authority, preferred

\* Letter from the Council of Madras to the Court of Directors, March, 1761.

paying a rent. The nizam had, however, no sincerity in his offers, either of friendship or territory; and the English were obliged, throughout the greater part of 1765, to maintain an armed observation of his movements. The following account of the issue of these transactions is brief and clear:—"At this period, however, events had laid the King or Mogul under overwhelming obligations to the English, whose power alone upheld him on the ancient but decaying throne of Delhi. He granted them, upon application, a firman, by which they became, without conquest, lawful possessors of the Northern Circars.\* Like the rest of India, this tract had been held by rajahs and polygars, who farmed the revenue, and exercised a sort of independent authority within the limits of their states. The imperial firman released them from tribute to the soubahdar of the Deccan, as well as to the nawab (or nabob) of the Carnatic, and transferred their allegiance to the English. Since the success of the company's arms, indeed, those powers had exercised little more than a nominal influence in the Northern Circars, and some new authority was called for to rescue them from the anarchy by which they were overwhelmed. The imperial grant, conferring a legal right,† placed them at the disposal of our countrymen; all that remained to confirm them in the territory, was annexation. The advantage of acquisition was apparent. It would give them possession of all the coast from the mouths of the Ganges to the Coromandel settlements,‡ excepting the province of Orissa, which, though included in the British dewanee, was held by the warlike Mahrattas.§

"When the English proceeded to take possession of their new acquisition, the nizam, rebelling openly against the imperial authority, pretended to feel exasperated at their acts,\* and prepared to make war upon them. Though entitled to enforce their privilege by arms, they preferred to negotiate peace, and agreed to rent from the nizam, for an annual sum of nine lacs of rupees, the Circars of Rajamundry, Ellore, Mustephaneegur, Chicacole, and Murtezanegur; while the Guntoo Circar was allotted to Salabat Jung, the old soubahdar of the Deccan, who had been dethroned by his brother. It was, perhaps, an excess of delicacy or timidity, which induced the company to offer such liberal terms; but it may have been, at that juncture, wiser than the policy of war. One stipulation in the treaty was, however, imprudent. The English agreed to assist the soubahdar with a military force, whenever he should require it; thus bringing on themselves the chance of dangerous and destructive wars, which might be equally profitless to themselves and ruinous to their allies.† This article of the treaty excited severe displeasure among the court of directors.‡ However, the territory was now included in their growing empire, and the soubahdar, with shrunken dominions, was left to exercise his versatile talent for treachery by intriguing with the enemies of his allies. His power, indeed, had otherwise diminished. The Nawab of the Carnatic, once his tributary, was now, by an imperial firman, created his equal.§

The English were now virtually masters of the Northern Circars, the coast of Coromandel, and the whole Carnatic.

## CHAPTER LXXI.

### CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH IN WESTERN INDIA AFTER THE BREAKING OUT OF WAR BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS IN 1744—CONQUEST OF THE PIRATE ANGRIA.

AT Tellicherry and Myhie, as has been shown in former chapters, the English and French were most frequently engaged in conflict on the coast of Western India. When tidings arrived in the former place, that Madras had submitted to Labourdonnais in 1746, the utmost consternation was felt, and the chief valuables of the settlement were removed

elsewhere. The council and garrison were in daily expectation of a visit from the fleet of the conqueror, when their fears were relieved by learning that a storm had wrecked the proud ships whose thunder they expected so soon to hear.

\* Sutherland's *Historical Sketch of the Princes of India*, p. 82.

† Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 455.

‡ *Letter to Bengal*, 1768.

§ *History of the British Conquests in India*. By Horace St. John, vol. i. p. 106.

\* Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 452.

† Penhoen's *Empire Anglais*, vol. ii. p. 456.

‡ Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 453.

§ Wilson's *Notes*, ibid.



On the 30th of March, 1748, the *Exeter* and *Winchester*, British men-of-war, attacked the French ship *St. Louis*, as she lay in the river of Myhie. She escaped by being hauled into shoal water, but so damaged as to be beyond repair.

When, in 1751, Dupleix was filling the Deccan with his fame, the council at Bombay was informed by certain spies of the King of Travancore, that the French chief had formed a comprehensive plan for the destruction of the British settlements on the coast of Malabar.\* Throughout the year 1751 demonstrations and minor conflicts took place between the French of Myhie and the English of Tellicherry, without any decided advantage on either side. The conflicts which each had with the native chiefs, and the intrigues carried on with these chiefs by the two hostile European nations, have been noticed in previous chapters on the affairs of Western India. The garrisons both of Myhie and Tellicherry were after this time much reduced; the latter garrison so much, that they were unable to repress the insolence of Cuny Nair, a most contemptible antagonist. As for the French, they were in a still worse plight, fearing an attack from the Canarese, distressed for want of provisions, and unable to meet the expenses of their forts to the northward. Officers and men, tired of waiting for their arrears of pay, deserted in large numbers, and in one day a captain, ensign, engineer, mate of a man-of-war, and five other Frenchmen sought refuge in the English factory.†

Up to the end of the year 1753 the English had continued to incur great expenses for fortifications at Tellicherry and other places in Malabar; nearly 100,000 rupees had been expended, and yet the forts were reported by Sir J. Foulis to be in a ruinous condition.

In 1756 a sort of "armed neutrality" was established between Tellicherry and Myhie, both parties expecting that the war which had slumbered in Europe for a season would burst forth again with renewed fury. The French chief visited the English factory for the purpose of establishing neutrality, "a dodge" which the chiefs of Myhie constantly practised when they felt themselves comparatively weak. The English on some occasions followed this example; but although the French had repeatedly profited by their generosity, it was not reciprocated. When Fort St. David was captured, the guns of Myhie thundered their salutes, and the offer of neutrality then made by the alarmed English was scornfully rejected; but when, in 1760, French arms suffered in Tanjore, and the Circars

and their fleets were chased by the English, the chief of Myhie was eager to represent the advantages of neutrality. Again, when Louet, the French chief of the factory, supposed that Admiral Cornish and Sir Eyre Coote were approaching the coast of Malabar, his earnest importunities for neutrality, by one who had refused it when it might have been accepted with a good grace, were humiliating. The English chief on that occasion made answer, that he would refer to the president at Bombay for instructions; but he, meanwhile, prepared for action should the British force be strengthened on that coast.

From 1756 until the final subjugation of the French on the Malabar coast, the operations of both nations were desultory, and on the part of the French mainly offered through their native alliances. The English were, however, strengthening such alliances, while the French, by their arrogance, tyranny, and above all, their bigotry, were rapidly losing influence. Meanwhile, the English were busy in supplying a petty prince and zealous partizan of theirs, styled the third King of Nelleasaroon, with stores and ammunition, which he used so effectually as to capture in September the French fort of Motally, mounting twenty-two guns; although he afterwards restored it, at the intercession of the Prince of Cherical. War was not actually proclaimed until the 7th of October, when the English had the good fortune to find themselves with several warm and lukewarm friends amongst the native princes, but no avowed enemy save the Boyanore. The French, on the other hand, had many and bitter enemies; the Prince of Cherical gave up their cause, and concluded a treaty with the English; the Cotiote was exceedingly incensed against them, because they had compelled his prime-minister, from fear of his life, to profess himself a Christian; and the chief of Nelleasaroon, equally hostile to them, offered to take their forts with his own men, if the English would only garrison them afterwards—an offer which the English chief was compelled to decline, so small were the number of European troops at his disposal. Between the principals, however, of the two factories there was only an exchange of courtesies. An English picket seized a French boat laden with pepper captured from the English, on which the chief of Tellicherry, although of course detaining the cargo, sent the boat with the letters found on her, unopened, to Myhie. M. Louet, in return, released English boats seized by a captain of a French man-of-war, sent back slaves that his men had lured away, and permitted his surgeon to render medical aid at the English factory. But when a native

\* *Bombay Diary*, 14th of November, 1751.

† *Bombay Quarterly Review*, October, 1857.

officer of a French ship was detected in raising recruits on British territory, and carried before the chief in council, they behaved to him more like brigands than generous enemies. After a solemn consultation they decided upon setting him at liberty, first confiscating his silver-headed cane and picking his pocket of 380 fanams.\*

While these events transpired in the neighbourhood of Tellicherry, others connected with the war occupied the attention and care of the factors of Ajengo. From the breaking out of the war in 1744, to the peace, and again after the short peace, until the end of the resumed war, the traders of this petty place were kept in alarm by the appearance of French ships of war in the offing. Their neighbour, the King of Travancore, assumed to be their protector, and threatened very often the utter extermination of all Frenchmen, should any land near Ajengo, or offer molestation to its people. His majesty, however, never did anything to assure the factors, but very much to add to their disquiet:—

“For a series of years this warlike prince was continually making application to the British for supplies of ammunition, small arms, and cannon, offering in payment captives taken in war, which the British accepted with reluctance, although admitting that they were cheaper than their slaves imported from Madagascar. With his other offers they closed most cheerfully. He had compelled his subjects to yield him a monopoly of all pepper grown in the country, and the factors were as glad to receive that as ready cash. He ceded to them also for a term of years the province of Tinnivelly, which they leased to a merchant; and it would have been of great value to them, had not the neighbouring polygars disturbed it, until reduced to order by a force sent from Madras under Captain Calliaud.† This liberality kept the victorious monarch on excellent terms with the British, and though a tyrannical oppressor of his subjects, he seems never but on one occasion, when his emissaries beat and plundered a helpless woman within the company's limits, to have molested the factory of Ajengo.”‡

The notice taken of Captain Calliaud's services in a previous chapter, bore upon the

policy of the Madras council, the relations of the English with the Nabob of the Carnatic, of the French with the Nizam of the Deccan, and of the issue of the policy initiated by Dupleix; it is here only necessary to say that the conduct of Calliaud ensured peace to the little factory at Ajengo, and to a certain extent along the coast of Malabar. The Tanjore monarch, grateful for the subjugation of the polygars, and always apprehensive of being subdued by the French, whom he so often boasted he would annihilate, offered no insults thenceforth to the comparatively helpless settlements of the English upon that part of the coast to which his power extended. Thus the effective operations in the war waged in the Carnatic, from Madras and St. David's, told upon Western India, as in fact they also influenced the fortunes of Bengal. Whatever was done in the Carnatic, affected the court of the Deccan and the heart of French influence in Southern India, so that along the whole shores of Malabar and Coromandel, the wave of power was felt as it ebbed and flowed from the impulses within, as the waves that wash those shores are agitated by the heaving of the ocean upon the verge of which they rise or sink.

An event occurred with which the name of Clive was connected, which much influenced the peace and prosperity of the English settlements in Western India, and strengthened them against the French, although itself not connected with that enemy. When Clive had received the honours conferred upon him in England, after the glories he had won in India, he entered parliament, was ejected on petition, distributed his resources among his relatives to whom he was much attached, lived in much style, and so reduced his temporal means that he was desirous to return again to India to recruit them, just at the moment when it suited the company to employ his services, which they were anxious to do, because they expected a renewed war with France after a brief and hollow peace.

The directors appointed him to an important office in the government of Fort St. David.\* The king made him a lieutenant-colonel in the royal army. He embarked on board the *Stratham* in March, 1755, and arrived in Bombay just as the pirate Angria had received a severe chastisement from Commodore James, then commanding the company's military marine in India.

\* Lord Macaulay says he was appointed governor M. Auber represents him as being nominated a member of council at Fort St. David. The *Bombay Quarterly* of April, 1857, on the authority of the *Bombay Diary*, calls him deputy-governor of that place.

\* *Tellicherry Diary*, 28th of April, 15th of September, 15th of October, 9th of November, 1756. *Bombay Diary*, 28th of April, 8th of May, 30th of August, 15th of December, 1757; 30th of November, 1758. *Ives's Voyage. Bombay Quarterly*, October, 1857, p. 221.

† As shown in previous chapters.

‡ *Bombay Quarterly. Ajengo Diary. Diary of the Select Committee. Orme's History*, vol. i. book v. *Forbes's Oriental Memoirs*, vol. i.

The council of Bombay were desirous of following up the victory of James by a more decisive blow. A royal fleet, accompanied by the company's navy, under Commodore James, the whole under orders of Admiral Watson, set sail for Gheria. The troops on board were commanded by Clive. In February, 1756, the armament arrived in the river, and at once attacked the stronghold of piracy in Western India. Watson succeeded in burning the whole of the enemy's ships. Clive attacked the fortress by land, which fell before his skill and valour. Prize money to the extent of £150,000 was divided among the conquerors.

The consequences of this victory were very great. The coast of Malabar was delivered from the presence of a nest of pirates, who, in resources and power, were more formidable than any piratical forces which had ever troubled the Eastern seas, or, perhaps, ever before or since ranged the ocean anywhere.

On the 12th of the October following, a treaty was formed with the Mahrattas, by which Gheria was given them by the English in exchange for Bancote and various villages. A clause was also inserted, that the Dutch should never be permitted to settle in the Mahratta dominions. The rajahs holding territory along the Malabar coast were so awed, that they made haste to sign treaties conferring privileges of trade. The Mogul himself was pleased with the subjugation of the pirates, by whom his own ships were frequently captured, and the event, joined with other transactions of subsequent occurrence, conduced to the granting of a firman by the Mogul in 1759, conceding to the company the government of Surat.

After Clive accomplished the reduction of Gheria, Lord Macaulay represents him as "having proceeded to his government of Fort St. David." This is an error: he returned to Bombay, and remained there some time, supposing that his services might be again required in connection with that presidency—a fact incompatible with the assertion that he had been designated to the *supreme* government of Fort St. David.

That Lord Macaulay is wrong in the above assertion is plain enough, for Clive became involved in a dispute with the governor and council at Bombay on a question as to his own military position, after the destruction of the pirate keep of Gheria. He returned to Bombay with the artillery, for the purpose of joining an expedition against the French, intended to be directed from that presidency, but which had been abandoned for another object. The Bombay council was

peculiarly supercilious to military men, and Clive, notwithstanding all his glory, was not particularly beloved by them.

A Captain de Funck, a Swedish officer who had experienced much tyranny and injustice from the president and council, was tried by court-martial, because he had refused to submit to a humiliation which the tyrannical president sought to impose upon him. The council appointed Sir James Foulis as president, an officer of ability and fairness. Clive was indignant that any officer but himself should have presided over the court, and remonstrated in angry terms. He protested to the council that he was "reduced to the necessity," as he observed, of reminding the president and council that he was commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, that he bore other distinguished titles, and had not been treated by the Honourable Richard Bouchier, Esquire—who, indeed, was never remarkable for civility—with proper courtesy. His letter was as follows:—

*Bombay, 15th of April, 1756.*

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—It is with much concern I find myself reduced to the necessity of delivering this letter on the subject of the general court-martial lately held on Captain De Funck.

Your honour and co. cannot be ignorant of the late Articles of War, which empower none but the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces for the time being to order a general court-martial; and your honour and co. must be sensible that, if I had interfered, no such court-martial could have sat. However, in this and indeed in everything relating to the honour, reputation, and welfare of the Honourable Company, I should gladly have acquiesced, and if your honour and co. had thought me worthy of the delegation given to Sir James Foulis, I would with pleasure have acted in obedience thereto, whom I apprehend had no right to be deemed commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, without the king's brevet of major can be proved superior to that of lieutenant-colonel.

Neither do I complain against your honour and co. for ordering the general court-martial, but against the governor only, who never thought proper to ask my advice or opinion, or even to inform me himself, or by any other person whatever, with one syllable relating thereto, and considering the rank I bear of lieutenant-colonel in his majesty's service, of Deputy Governor of St. David's, of a member of the committee of this place, I do not think I have been treated by the Honourable Richard Bouchier, Esq., agreeably to the intention of the Honourable the Court of Directors, who, I flatter myself, will do me justice herein, when they come to hear thereof.

I am, with respect, honourable sir and sirs,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT CLIVE.\*

This letter of Lieutenant-colonel Clive was answered by Daniel Draper, secretary to government, who, in the name of his superiors, tried to check the spoilt hero's arrogance by a little delicate satire. He could not, of course,

\* The above letter does not appear in any of the memoirs of Clive, and was first published in the *Bombay Quarterly* of April, 1857.

pretend to instruct *such* an officer in his military duties, but he would venture to refresh his memory on a few points which all knew, save those who were wilfully ignorant. Officers did not always attain to command by seniority, as the young colonel well knew. That depended upon the pleasure of the supreme authority. The rank of such as had been appointed for a particular service had no efficacy when that service was performed, and they were without employment. The government of Bombay fully acknowledged the respect due to his majesty's commission, but they were at liberty to choose whether they would engage Colonel Clive's military services or not. The lieutenant-colonel wrote as if he was the only bearer of this commission in Bombay; but many other officers bore it, and all concurred in the propriety of the arrangements made for this court-martial. In conclusion, the government assured him that they had no wish to insult him, as he supposed, and they would refer the question in dispute to the court of directors. The ardent spirit of Clive was pining for action. It would seem as if from very *ennui*, he complained that he could not enjoy the little excitement of sitting on a court-martial, and relieved the monotony of inactive life by opening a controversial correspondence with the government. In a little time worthier occupations were found for him, and, quitting Bombay for ever, he entered a new field of fame on the other side of the continent.\*

In a chapter on the rise of the navy and army of the company, it was remarked that the troops of Bombay occasionally served in the other presidencies, and that Captain Armstrong, serving under Major Lawrence, had been tyrannically and unjustly treated by Clive.

In 1754 Captain Forbes's company of Europeans, and some Swiss and native troops, served under this Captain Armstrong with ability and bravery. Both men and officers complained of ill-treatment. Immediately after the tragedy of the black hole of Calcutta, Captain Armstrong again served with the Bombay artillery and some other troops from that presidency. He made many representations to his government of the injustice and oppression of Clive. Besides his letters to his own presidency of Bombay, "he had brought to the notice of the president in Bengal what he considered an unfair distribution of prize money, and his letter had been favourably received. Clive, offended at this, ordered him to resign his command, although no charges of misconduct had been brought against him, and to lead some aged and infirm topasses

back to Bombay. Armstrong remonstrated, and was brought to a court-martial. As he was honourably acquitted, we may suppose that he had, as he said, been harshly and unjustly treated. Clive added one more instance of his malice and disregard of law, by refusing to insert his acquittal in general orders. But none of these acts, so discreditable to the Indian hero, are recorded by his biographers, who, with the exception of a bitter and libellous foreigner, seem anxious to prove that modern biography is little more than systematised eulogy."\*

In 1760 a reinforcement was sent from Bombay to Madras, consisting chiefly of a company of European infantry and three companies of royal artillery. Thus Bombay lent considerable assistance to the other presidencies, having so little territory of its own to defend. After the destruction of the pirates, the presidency were occupied with their affairs at Gombroon in the Persian Gulf, through Bussorah with Persia, and in Carnara. These engagements were altogether commercial, although some insubordination occurred among the military at Gombroon, provoked by the neglect and arrogance of the council.

In 1760 a report reached the presidency that the Mahrattas were conspiring with the French, which was true; but it did not suit Nannah, the Mahratta chief, to avow it when the agents of the company arrived at Poonah; and whatever schemes he had in view were soon extinguished by his death. The successor of Nannah was his son Mhaderao; and a deputation was sent by the council of Bombay to condole with him on his father's death. The chief turned the occasion to diplomatic ends, and sought to draw the English into an engagement to aid him against the viceroys of the Deccan. This the council declined; but they interposed by good offices, and appeased the wrath of the nizams. While this peaceable intercourse proceeded between the Bombay presidency and the Mahrattas of Poonah, other bodies of that strange people were harassing the borders of Bengal, so that the English president there addressed his brother of Bombay in 1761, proposing a general attack upon the Mahratta nation. The Bombay council wisely replied that the Mahrattas of Poonah regulated their affairs in such a way as not to be compromised by the conduct of their brethren further east; that it was very desirable to humble the Mahratta power, but the state of that nation and its relation to Bombay rendered the time for any attack upon it inopportune. This clear and decisive opinion prevented the attempt projected in Bengal.

\* *Bombay Diary*, April and July 20th, 1756. *Bombay Quarterly*, April 1857.

\* *Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857, p. 299.

Subsequent events proved the wisdom of this decision, for the Mahrattas and the nizams became friends, although such friendship was like the summer cloud, which the slightest breeze bears away. Thus, while the affairs of the French pressed heavily on Madras and Bengal, Bombay felt little of this pressure, except in the constant warfare which was maintained by a single settlement of the presidency of Tellicherry, with a single settlement of the French, Myhie. That conflict, like every other between the two nations in India, was destined to be brought at last to a close in favour of the English. After the fall of Pondicherry, the English at Tellicherry resolved upon a grand attack on Myhie. The French had hopes of securing its neutrality, and, before the fall of their capital, used renewed and suppliant efforts with the factors of Tellicherry, to secure to Myhie a neutral position. Their object was to make it a storehouse for the goods which they supposed were at Pondicherry, and might be brought thence for safety. After the fall of the capital it was hoped that Myhie might be permitted to remain as a gate to Southern India. The council at Tellicherry politely, but steadily, refused compliance with the request, reminding the petitioners that similar requests, under reasonable and justifiable circumstances, when made by the English, were insolently and haughtily repulsed, and that France had sent out orders with Lally to level all the fortified places, and even open cities where the English had any interest in India. It so happened that the council of Tellicherry sent out an expedition against Nettore, which was unsuccessful, through the treachery, bigotry, and inhumanity of native allies. A severe loss in killed and wounded was the result. The French took occasion, before the troops returned, to press for a final answer, whether Myhie might calculate on neutrality. The English governor, fearing an attack on the settlement during the absence of the main body of his troops, appeared to acquiesce, while to confirm matters, as it were, he referred the proposition to Bombay. The French governor was thus led to hope that his scheme would at last succeed. The English chief was cognizant of the fact that Admiral Pococke was preparing a descent on Myhie, and he preserved an attitude of negotiation until his garrison returned from Nettore, and further, until the "pear was ripe" in the plans and projects of the naval and military authorities.

In the beginning of 1761, Major Piers, and Major, afterwards Sir Hector Munro, with detachments of royal infantry, arrived with the purpose of reinforcing Coote, in the

siege of Pondicherry; but, discovering that they were too late, they proposed to the presidency of Bombay, the reduction of Myhie. Their plan received the sanction of the council. There was one, Captain Keir, who had been a fellow passenger to India with the wife of the French engineer on duty at the fort of Myhie. This lady had given the captain an invitation to call and see them. It was resolved that he should accept the invitation, and act as a spy. He was received in a friendly manner, and made such a report as encouraged the intended assailants. Means were taken to intercept any reliefs arriving to the garrison. The native chiefs were all or nearly all engaged in the affair, for, with the exception of Boyanore, they avowedly hated the French; and it was generally believed that that fickle chief owed them no goodwill. On the second of February English boats closed around the fortress. Louet, the commander-in-chief, pretending not to understand their object, intimated, when the first came within range of his fire, how painful the duty imposed upon him was of sinking the boat, unless it drew off, his orders being to allow no boat to approach his batteries. The reply was instantaneous and decisive, a summons to surrender. For six days the French chief refused to surrender; but, knowing that Pondicherry had fallen, and that there was no hope of succour, he offered to surrender, if but his garrison were allowed the honours of war, and that the liberty of Roman Catholic worship in the place should not be interrupted, and the churches remain the property of the clergy. All these conditions were granted. The garrison marched out with drums beating, colours flying, and with their field artillery. It was stipulated that they should not be detained as prisoners of war, but sent to the Isle of Bourbon, the Cape of Good Hope, or France, as opportunity allowed, and that the private personal property of military and civilians should be respected. All these conditions were conceded on condition that the other French forts dependent upon Myhie should be surrendered. The French factory at Calicut it was agreed should remain neutral, as that was not a place of arms, or one that the French could use for the subjugation of the natives. All these stipulations were faithfully agreed to by the English. When the garrisons marched out, the officers surrendered their swords, which were instantly returned. The captives were made the objects of the most generous kindness and respect. When Louet arrived at Tellicherry he was saluted by fifteen guns. One lady, whose husband had broken his parole, was alone detained, for some time, in imprisonment.

The fortifications of Myhie were destroyed, and in a manner formally to show that it was in consequence of the orders issued from France, to level the cities and forts of the English. The work was not, however, heartily set about, and was very imperfectly performed.\* The subordinate fortresses of Motaly, Nelleasaroon, and Veremala were faithfully evacuated by the French, but immediately occupied by some Nairs, under a chief with the high-sounding title of Kapoo, Prince of Cherical, and nephew of Badenkalamkur, King Regent of Colastry. Without loss of time, Munro marched against them, at the head of three hundred and eighty Highlanders, some of the company's regular and irregular troops, and two guns—a twelve and nine-pounder. Captain Nelson, late engineer of the French garrison at Myhie, joined the expedition as a volunteer, with other French officers, "keen for revenge against their black allies." Thus fell the last bulwarks of French power and influence in India. It was on the Malabar coast that the first contentions began; and when the rumble of warlike preparation was hushed, and the tap of the French drum was silent along the Coromandel shores, and in the Deccan, the din of battle was heard, and the mournful parade of vanquished and disarmed captives seen on the shores of Malabar.

The incidents of the French war were not, for a few years, followed by any of a martial nature in Western India. In 1765 another nest of sea robbers, the Malwar pirates, was rooted out, who had begun to show some activity. But a new storm was soon portended. The famous Hyder had gained ascendancy in Mysore, and laid the foundation of a military dynasty. Bombay regarded with astonishment and apprehension his growing power, which indicated that a day must soon come when war with a fierce people, ably commanded, in a difficult territory, would ensue, or the presidency of Bombay, and the Carnatic, be overrun by perpetual predatory incursion, or a permanent conquest, by a barbaric race. In future pages, the rise and fall of the new power in Mysore will be treated; but in the interval of the wars which issued in such fortunate results, Bombay experienced much alarm and trouble. The possession of supreme power at Surat—where first the English name became great in India, and where first English valour won victory from a European rival—gave great satisfaction to the presidency at Bombay and to the directors in London. Bombay was, for a time, the most tranquil of the English governments in India, and its commercial prosperity was developed with peace.

## CHAPTER LXXII.

### EVENTS IN BENGAL AFTER THE BREAKING OUT OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE IN 1744—MASSACRE OF ENGLISHMEN IN THE BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA—EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH.

THE chief interest of the French lay in the Carnatic. In Bengal their settlements were of small importance, although at Chandernagore they made considerable efforts to establish a trade. During the short war which broke out in 1744, no events of importance between the French and English occurred in their extreme eastern settlements; nor until in 1757 it became known that, after the short peace, war again raged in Europe between the two great countries. The English were, therefore, engaged in Bengal in the quiet prosecution of their trade, as far as the intrigues and exactions of the nabobs and the incursions of the Mahrattas allowed.

In the year 1747, the directors hoped that their agents in Bengal would be able to render assistance in weakening the power of the

French in other directions, for they thus addressed them on the 16th of October:—

"Par. 3. Upon our strenuous application his majesty hath been graciously pleased to send a strong squadron of men-of-war, under the command of the honourable Rear-Admiral Boscawen, with these our ships whereon this letter is sent.

"7. In case Rear-Admiral Boscawen, or the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, should require your assistance in attacking the enemy anywhere near you, we hereby order you to give it him to the utmost of your power, and to put under his command what military, marine, or other force, you can possibly procure or spare consistent with the safety of your place."

So far from being able to render any assistance to the company or to the crown, the directors of affairs at Calcutta were crouching

\* *Bombay and Tellicherry Diaries. Bombay Quarterly.*

in their factory under the influence of the most abject cowardice. It is sorrowful to relate to what a degree of tameness and timidity Englishmen could have sunk in the persons of the traders at Calcutta.

The directors at home became at last so sensible of the poltroonery of their representatives in Bengal, that they wrote them a long letter on June 17, 1748, which, in two paragraphs, the second and sixth, reproaches their want of courage, and stimulates their manliness so as to do what in them lay for their own defence. These paragraphs throw an interesting light upon the character of the Anglo-Bengalese, and the spirit of the times in England relating to Indian affairs:—

“Par. 2. It is plain from the apprehension you was under on the loss of Madras, lest the French should destroy you next, that you neither thought your own strength, though supported at that time by six of his majesty’s ships, nor the neutrality of the country, a sufficient security, and you at all times stand so much in awe of the country government that they easily and shamefully raise immense contributions upon you at the company’s expense, though almost always under pretence of abuses in carrying on private trade.

“6. If you do not prevail upon the nabob to acquiesce in your setting about the works and fortifications without molestation, you are to let him know in a proper manner. You have our orders to make Calcutta as secure as you can against the French, or any other European enemy; and that if he obstructs you in following those orders you are forbid to issue any money for trade, and must do the best you can to fulfil them. Tell him that you shall be sorry to be obliged to take such measures as may be ruinous to his revenues and the trade of the country in general; and you may add, the King of England having the protection of the company greatly at heart, as they may perceive by the strong force he hath sent to the East Indies to meet the French, his majesty will support the company in whatever they think fit to do for their future security; for though a peace is now making with France, no one knows how long it may last, and when war is broke out it is always too late to make fortifications strong enough to make defence against an enterprising enemy; as appears from what happened at Madras, where strong works were erecting, but could not be half finished before the French attacked and took the place.”

Events to the year 1756 were in harmony with the state of things indicated by the letters of the directors in 1747-8. Upon the advent of the government of Suraj-ad-Dowla as soubahdar or viceroy of Bengal, which

began on the death of his grandfather, Ali Verdi, the 9th of April, 1756, the English experienced increased oppressions, and were harassed by augmented fears. The soubahdar was a wicked young prince, voluptuous, avaricious, cruel, treacherous, and hated the English, of whose growing power his grandfather had conceived a jealousy which the grandson inherited. On various pretexts of too little interest to relate, he sought a quarrel with the English at Calcutta. His chief object was to rob the presidency, concerning the riches of which he had formed absurdly exaggerated notions. He marched against Calcutta, and on his way seized Cossimbazar, to the garrison of which he offered the alternative of indiscriminate slaughter, or immediate surrender.

On the 18th of June he attacked the outposts of Calcutta. The factors had neither skill, courage, nor adequate means of defence. They had, however, vast shipping accommodation in the river, by which an orderly and easy escape was practicable. Instead of system and coolness, extreme disorder prevailed, and a cowardice utterly shameless. On the morning of the 19th, the women, children, and effects were to be sent to the ships by a decision of council formed the previous night, while the male inhabitants were to defend the place until succour might be obtained. Such was the confusion during the embarkation of the women and children, that a panic ensued, which communicated itself to the seamen, so that the ships began to move down the river, increasing the panic on shore. The chief persons in the place fled with the women, abandoning their comrades in arms and their duty, preferring dishonour to danger. The governor, Drake, whose want of capacity gave the soubahdar an excuse for the war, was among the fugitives. He was accompanied in his ignominy by Mr. Machet, Captain Commandant Minchin, and Captain Grant. Messrs. Manningham and Frankland, members of council, were the persons who set the example of cowardice, for they “dropped down the river in the *Dodally* on the night of the 18th.” The president followed with his companions, in the morning. It appears that these infamous men were the means of creating the panic in the fleet, and so anxious were the council, president, commandant, and other civil and military persons of note, for their personal safety, to the disregard of all other considerations, that they ordered the company’s vessels, on board of which they were, to pass down the river, abandoning their comrades to their fate. When the flight of the government and commanders were ascertained by the rest of the

company's servants, their alarm was only exceeded by their anger. They, however, determined to defend the place, and elected Mr. Holwell to be their governor, who conducted himself with much spirit and ability in a situation for which he had no previous preparation. He afterwards wrote an account of the transactions in which he had taken so prominent a part.

John Cooke was secretary to the governor and council, and remained to share the fate of his companions in the chances of war. He was examined in 1772, by a committee of the House of Commons appointed to "inquire into the nature, state, and condition of the East India Company," and gave the following evidence:—"Signals were now thrown out," says Mr. Cooke, "from every part of the fort, for the ships to come up again to their stations, in hopes they would have reflected (after the first impulse of their panic was over) how cruel as well as shameful it was, to leave their countrymen to the mercy of a barbarous enemy, and for that reason we made no doubt they would have attempted to cover the retreat of those left behind, now they had secured their own; but we deceived ourselves; and there never was a single effort made, in the two days the fort held out after this desertion, to send a boat or vessel to bring off any part of the garrison." "Never, perhaps," says Mr. Orme, "referring to the catastrophe which subsequently took place, was such an opportunity of performing an heroic action so ignominiously neglected; for a single sloop, with fifteen brave men on board, might, in spite of all the efforts of the enemy, have come up, and, anchoring under the fort, have carried away all who suffered in the dungeon."

Mr. Holwell endeavoured by throwing letters over the walls to open negotiations with the enemy for favourable terms of capitulation; but those efforts were in vain, for while waiting for an answer to one of these communications, having suspended the fire of the garrison until the reply should arrive, the enemy treacherously approached the walls and stormed the place. The garrison was not given over, after Mohammedan fashion, to indiscriminate slaughter. Most of those who composed it were taken prisoners, among whom were some ladies who were not able to escape. Mr. Holwell was bound and brought before the viceroy, who immediately ordered him to be unbound. He assured him upon the faith of a soldier that no harm should happen to him or his people. When evening came, it was a question with the guards where the prisoners should be disposed of for the night, and it was resolved to place them in a

narrow chamber insufficient to hold them. The result was the destruction of most of their number before morning. This event has been memorable in Indian and in English history as the massacre of "the Black Hole of Calcutta."

The space of this apartment was only twenty feet square; it was not a den or hole, but a comparatively airy prison suitable to a small number of persons. Mill, who loses no opportunity to lower his own countrymen, from his desire to blacken the reputation of the company, treats this horrid event as one of providential retribution upon the English for using so vile a dungeon for their common prison; adducing the fact, with others, as proof of their cruelty to prisoners. He particularly adduces the state of the prison of Calcutta in 1782, as exemplifying the indifference of the English to the sufferings of prisoners, and he refers to certain allegations of cruel indifference to the lives of sepoys. There can be no doubt that the prison of Calcutta during the eighteenth century was pestilential and filthy. It is not to be denied that the English, as a nation, were apt to disregard the sufferings of inferiors, but they were never cruel to men of their own rank, when prisoners, and to enemies they had always borne the reputation of generous conquerors. Such the French have always acknowledged them to be, and no other nation has had an equal experience of them in that capacity. The whole treatment of this subject by Mill is disingenuous and unjust. Professor Wilson, always eager to do justice upon Mill himself, seizes this occasion of his unfair narrative to reply with much severity and effect as follows:—"The spirit in which this transaction is noticed, in this and the preceding note, as well as in the text, is wholly unjustifiable. It extenuates a deliberate act of wanton cruelty by erroneous assumptions and inapplicable analogies. The Black Hole was no dungeon at all; it was a chamber above ground—small and ill-aired only with reference to the number of persons forced into it, but affording abundant light and air to many more than it had ever lodged under the English administration. According to Holwell,\* it was a room eighteen feet square, with a door on one side, and two windows on another. In 1808 a chamber was shown in the old fort at Calcutta then standing, said to be the Black Hole of 1756: its situation did not correspond exactly with Mr. Holwell's description of it, but if not the same, it was a room of the same description and size, such as is very

\* Letter to Dr. Davis, 28th February, 1757; published in Holwell's *India Tracts*.



common amongst the offices of both public and private buildings in Calcutta, and no doubt accurately represented the kind of place which was the scene of this occurrence. It bore by no means the character of a prison. It was much more light, airy, and spacious than most of the rooms used formerly by the London watch, or at present by the police, for purposes of temporary durance. Had a dozen or twenty people been immured within such limits for a night, there would have been no hardship whatever in their imprisonment, and in all probability no such number of persons ever was confined in it. The English, then, in the objectionable sense in which the author chooses to understand the 'Black Hole,' never had such a prison. The state of the Calcutta jail, in 1782, like that of the common jails in England or in Europe, was, no doubt, bad enough; but it is not said that its inmates had ever died of want of air, or that one hundred and twenty perished in a single night. Even if the excuse of inconsiderateness might be urged for driving the prisoners into a space so utterly inadequate to their numbers, there was abundant opportunity to correct the mistake, when it was seen what suffering it occasioned. The whole transaction admits of no defence: it was an exemplification of Mohammedan insolence, intolerance, and cruelty; and in contemplating the signal retribution by which it has been punished, a mind susceptible of reverence, though free from superstition, can scarcely resist the impression, that the course of events was guided by higher influences than the passions and purposes of man."

The horrors of the massacre itself mock description. When the unfortunate victims were but a short time within the precincts of their prison, their sufferings became intense, and their cries for mercy were as vehement as the agonies of despair could make them. Their guards mocked them, some of their keepers holding up lights to the gratings for the others to have the satisfaction of witnessing the struggles and poignant sufferings of those doomed to death. A general rush for the neighbourhood of the windows added to the horrors of the occasion, and the desperate efforts to obtain a position near the apertures for air, caused many of the weaker to be trampled to death by the stronger. This also afforded amusement to their callous hearted keepers. Mr. Holwell, who obtained a place near a window with some others, offered money to the sentinels to procure water, some received the bribe, and did not perform the stipulated service, others were more merciful. One benevolent soldier brought water repeatedly, and showed by the expression of

his countenance as he held up his hand, a kind and pitying disposition.

To the appeals which were made by Mr. Holwell, for some one to convey to the viceroy a knowledge of their condition, the reply was that he slept, and no one dare awake him. In the morning, when he did awake, and sent for the prisoners, twenty-three men, and one woman alone remained alive, and most of these were found insensible among the already putrifying dead. Such was the case with the governor. The lady who was amongst the living, the viceroy took to his harem. The poorer prisoners, from whom no money could be extorted, were dismissed: the principal persons among the survivors were kept standing in chains before the tyrant soubahdar, and threatened with death, if they did not disclose where treasure was hid. As no treasure was obtained, they were sent, loaded with irons, to Moorshedabad. No clemency was shown to the survivors, who were fed with rice and water, in quantities insufficient. The tyrant did everything short of murdering his victims.

Mr. Mill thinks that the tragedy of "the Black Hole" might have been averted, if the persons incarcerated had offered a bribe to one of the superior officers of the soubahdar, and adds, "to no one does it appear that this expedient occurred." Of course, it was impossible for them to reach any "officer of high authority," except through the medium of their keepers, whom it is not at all likely the imprisoned failed to urge by every persuasive, money included, to take the steps most likely to secure them a more lenient place of confinement. Hugh Murray, Esq., in his *History of British India* (p. 317), declares that what Mr. Mill represents the English as too stupid to think of, was actually tried, without success, by Mr. Holwell. His language is, "The jemautdars, or Indian guards, were walking before the window, and Mr. Holwell, seeing one who bore on his face a more than usual expression of humanity, adjured him to procure for them a room in which they could breathe, assuring him next morning of a reward of 1000 rupees. The man went away—but returned, saying it was impossible. Thinking the offer had been too low, the prisoners tendered 2000 rupees. The man again went,—and returned, saying that the nabob was asleep, and no one durst awake him;—the lives of one hundred and forty-six men being nothing in comparison to disturbing for a moment the slumbers of a tyrant." Not only the confinement in "the Black Hole," but the whole of the siege and capture of Calcutta is related by the historian Mill with the animus of one who desired to expose and inculpate his own countrymen as much as possible,

and extenuate the conduct of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, meriting the indignant protest which was written by Horace St. John, in his work on Indian history:—"The ingenuity, not to say the eloquence, of a British historian has been perverted to fabricate, or at least to suggest, a defence of this celebrated crime. It might appear to him heroic to defend what all the rest of mankind declared infamous; but that act is justly condemned as susceptible of no palliation. It was the cruelty of a Moham-medan despot.\* A hint is, indeed, insinuated by another writer, on the authority of native accounts, that Suraj-ad-Dowlah was innocent of the deed, and that stupidity, not wickedness, caused the misery which ensued to the victims.† The ferocious character of the prince, however, renders this a weak plea for his reputation. It appears certain that by his will such vengeance was dealt on the English, and the blood of a hundred and forty-three unhappy men cried for punishment upon their murderers. This is no illiberal interpretation of history, for, clear Suraj-ad-Dowlah of this crime, and he is still a monster. It was as notorious to the Europeans as it was to his own people, and his inhumanity was persevering.‡ If ever a nation had cause of war, Great Britain then had. That people would have been unworthy of an empire which did not rise to punish the author of such a crime."§

When tidings of these events arrived in Madras and Fort St. David, the feeling produced among the English was one of intense indignation, and a determination, if possible, to regain their lost position and avenge their murdered countrymen. Colonel Clive had remained at St. David's after he left Bombay. Admiral Watson was upon the coast with a very considerable navy, so that there was no want of able commanders, and there existed tolerable resources to avenge the injury that had been sustained. Meanwhile, Suraj-ad-Dowlah made ostentatious triumph, tidings of which reached the British, and still further deepened their resentment. The brutal soubahdar informed his master, upon the tottering throne of Delhi, that he had expelled the English from Bengal, forbid Englishmen for ever to dwell within its precincts, purged Calcutta of the infidels, and, to commemorate the event, called it by a new name—Alinagore, the Port of God. It was in August that the dreadful news of the fall of Calcutta, and the murder of so many Englishmen, reached Madras; and Lord Macaulay ex-

presses his admiration of the fact that so inflamed was the military ardour of the garrison, that in forty-eight hours they determined upon an expedition up the Bay of Bengal and the Hoogly. It was the universal desire out of the council that Clive should have the command of the army, which eventually consisted of nine hundred English infantry and fifteen hundred sepoys. These set forth, as Lord Macaulay has written, "to punish a prince who had more subjects than Louis the Fifteenth or the Empress Maria Theresa."

The fitting out of the expedition was not as prompt as the determination to accomplish it. It was not until October that it set sail against adverse winds, which kept it beating about in the bay until December. The cause of this delay was highly discreditable to the English. The following account of it by Mill, is too true for the honour of the president and council of Madras:—"It was resolved, after some debate, that the re-establishment of the company's affairs in Bengal should be pursued at the expense of every other enterprise. A dispute, however, of two months ensued, to determine in what manner prizes should be divided; who should command; and what should be the degree of power entrusted with the commander. The parties, of whom the pretensions were severally to be weighed, were Mr. Pigot, who had been Governor of Madras since the departure of Saunders, but was void of military experience; Colonel Aldercon, who claimed as senior officer of the king, but was unacquainted with the irregular warfare of the natives; Colonel Lawrence, whose experience and merit were unquestionable, but to whose asthmatical complaints the close and sultry climate of Bengal was injurious; and Clive, to whom none of these exceptions applied. It was at last determined that Clive should be sent. It was also determined that he should be sent with powers independent of the presidency of Calcutta. Among his instructions, one of the most peremptory was, that he should return, and be again at Madras with the whole of the troops, in the month of April; about which time it was expected that in consequence of the war between France and England, a French fleet would arrive upon the coast. It was principally, indeed, with a view to this return, that independence of the Calcutta rulers, who might be tempted to retain him, was bestowed upon Clive."

The viceroy was enjoying the pastime of torturing fliers and other animals, imprisoning and executing human victims, and revelling in every debauch at his capital of Moorshedabad. He revelled, too, in security as to enemies domestic and foreign. He was not

\* See Scrafton's *Account*, p. 52.

† Stewart's *History of Bengal*, p. 506.

‡ Penhoen's *Empire Anglaise*, vol. ii. p. 33.

§ *British Conquests in India*, chap. ix. p. 73.

much better or worse than many other Mohammedan princes, to whom "the faithful" rendered a conscientious and even contented allegiance. His ideas of European powers were the most unenlightened. He had, it is true, been jealous of the English, but he supposed that if their power in India were once broken, they had no resources behind to press forward again their beaten Indian forces. In all his views he was flattered by his minions, for none dare call in question the opinions of the sanguinary voluptuary.

Before the tardy English had consumed the many intervening months, there was time for the tyrant to miss the revenues their commerce yielded. His ministers were compelled to disclose the unwelcome intelligence that the gains of his treasury were much diminished since the traders were expelled, and as he encouraged the expression of their views, he was informed that the only remedy was to allow them to return, to tax them heavily, so as to obtain for himself a large portion of their profits, but otherwise to allow them to trade in peace and with security to their persons and their property. He was convinced by these arguments, and was in the frame of mind which they were calculated to produce, when he was astounded by the intelligence that a force of armed Englishmen and a proud war-fleet were in the Hoogly. He had not heard of the preparations against him, and if his ministers had, they did not deem it politic to inform him. However vexed, he was not alarmed. He expected to annihilate in a short time the feeble force which landed, and gave express orders to his generals to perform that feat. He drew in his forces to Moorshedabad, and marched at their head to Calcutta. But before he had collected his troops for the accomplishment of his design, Clive, with his usual rapidity of action, had inflicted defeat and humiliation upon the soubahdar's garrisons. The fleet was moved up the river to the vicinity of Moidapore, the admiral intending the next morning to attack the fort of Budge-Budge, about ten miles below the town. Clive, not aware that the enemy were encamped in the vicinity, landed and ordered his men to lie down to rest. In thus acting Clive committed a rashness, which might have terminated the war. Orme describes him as having placed his men in a position which left a surprise possible, and as having neglected the precaution of outposts and sentinels. The result was what might have been expected—a sudden attack of the enemy, who came on timidly, and were led by a coward. Still the attack was perilous, and it required all Clive's courage and address to avert a catastrophe. The cavalry of the enemy held back; had they

charged, Clive would have found it impossible to have presented a formation which would have issued in a repulse. This was an exemplification of the rashness and fearlessness of the man. Repeatedly, in the Carnatic, when serving under Lawrence, and when in chief command, he exposed himself and his soldiers, and the cause for which they fought, to imminent danger of destruction, by a foolhardy contempt of foes, and indifference to death. The surprise effected by the enemy enabled the garrison to penetrate the plan of the commander, which was, to intercept its flight when the cannonade of the fleet should drive it from the fort. The native force, however, abandoning the fort in the night, stole away in a direction which Clive could not have supposed probable, and baffled his designs. His generalship was, and not for the first time, at fault. Clive marched along by land; Watson sailed up the river. The enemy retreated from the various positions which they occupied, almost without firing a shot. The valour and discipline displayed by the Europeans in the surprise taught the enemy a salutary lesson.

On the 2nd of January, 1757, the armament was before Calcutta. A few broadsides from the fleet expelled the garrison. The merchandise was found in the condition it was left when the English council fled, as the viceroy had ordered it to be reserved for himself. All the private dwellings had been sacked.

Upon the capture of the place, jealousies sprung up between the admiral and Colonel Clive. The admiral desired to exclude the company's troops from the garrison. Clive insisted that they were the proper portion of the armament to assume that duty. They also differed as to who should appoint a governor of the city. Clive vindicated his claims with determination. The bickerings which commenced between the admiral and colonel continued throughout the whole time of their co-operation in the service. Captain Coote was ordered with a detachment to attack Hoogly, which was captured, the enemy offering a poor resistance. Prize-money, to the extent of £15,000, fell to the forces by this capture.

The viceroy, alarmed at these successes, opened negotiations. According to most historians, overtures were made by Clive, who, whatever his boldness in actual battle, was liable to be awed by the magnitude of a great undertaking before actually entered upon. He had now the whole army of the viceroy of Bengal before him, and a handful of troops to combat that great army. Lord Macaulay maintains that the overtures were

made by the soubahdar, and that he offered to restore to the English their settlements, and make compensation for the injuries which he had inflicted. Admiral Watson was opposed to overtures for peace being either made or accepted by the British. As to the places previously in the possession of the English, they had just captured them; as to compensation, they could take it. On the whole, the admiral thought that until Suraj felt that his vicerealty itself was in danger, and was obliged to sue for peace after severe losses and defeats, he would remain a treacherous although flexible foe, ever ready to make war when an opportunity arose. By striking a bold and decisive blow, the admiral believed permanent peace might be secured.

Clive hesitated: in the language of Mr. Murray, "He was not yet fully aware of the weakness of Indian potentates, and was by no means forward to rush into a contest with the ruler of twenty millions of men." It was plain in these differences that Watson had not confidence in either the intelligence or stability of Clive, although placing the utmost reliance upon his audacity and presence of mind in the most appalling danger, and in his fertility of invention in all sudden emergencies. Lord Macaulay gives a view of Clive's relation to these transaction somewhat different to this. He says, "Clive's profession was war, and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Suraj-ad-Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee, chiefly composed of servants of the company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts and be compensated for their losses. The government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The provinces of the nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful; and Clive consented to treat, though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished." His lordship adds, "With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier, carrying into effect with eminent ability and valour the plans of others. Henceforward, he is chiefly to be regarded as a statesman; and his military movements are to be considered subordinate to his military designs."

Mill says that the anger of the viceroy was influenced by the capture of Hoogly, which the English attacked solely for plunder, and therefore he ordered his army to march against Calcutta. These statements are not borne out

by the facts as related by Mr. Mill himself, when received as a whole. The expedition of Coote to Hoogly was a fair and lawful operation of a war of reprisals, and the fact that after the capture of Hoogly the soubahdar temporised and pretended to be desirous of peace is indisputable.

Hugh Murray says, referring to the different views of Clive and Watson, that the former prevailed so far that a mission was sent to the soubahdar, who received it honourably, and even proposed terms that were considered admissible; but the writer adds, concerning the prince, "He did not, however, discontinue his march, and by various evasions avoided bringing the treaty to a conclusion." Lord Macaulay takes the same view of the nabob's conduct. The French at Chandernagore, at this juncture, according to Mill, proposed neutrality, even although their respective nations were at war in Europe. This, however, was a feint, for the French at that station could not but know the design of their countrymen to drive the British out of India, and the policy of rejecting proposals of neutrality whenever they were strong enough to make war. Professor Wilson remarks upon this alleged offer, and the time at which Mill represents it to have been made:—"There is some contradiction in the statements of different authorities on this subject, which can be reconciled only by a consideration of dates and circumstances. It appears probable, that the French were not informed of the war in Europe, until after the march of the nawab to Calcutta, and the negotiations for peace with the English. They could not, therefore, have joined him sooner, and to prevent that junction taking place, was one of Clive's reasons for agreeing to the treaty more readily than was thought advisable by Admiral Watson. He writes to the chairman, 'I know there are many who think I have been too precipitate in the conclusion of the treaty, but they never knew that the delay of a day or two might have ruined the company's affairs, by the junction of the French with the nawab, which was on the point of being carried into execution.'\* With the conclusion of the treaty, the French lost their opportunity of co-operating with the nawab. Their negotiations for a neutrality were subsequent to the nawab's retreat; and if Clive's account of the matter be correct, the English had not much reason to be grateful for their forbearance."

The soubahdar, after making many pretences of negotiation, appeared on the 3rd of February before Calcutta, immediately investing it. Clive's resolve the next morning to attack this camp have been severely criticised, and

\* *Life*, i. 179.

with justice. A thick mist also obscured his operations. Nevertheless, he succeeded in cutting through the camp, and returned, having suffered as well as inflicted heavy loss. The nabob was terrified at so audacious an act of courage, and became earnest in his overtures for peace, and on the 9th of February a treaty was concluded. The terms were the same as he at first offered, with an additional article that the English might fortify Calcutta. Two days afterwards, he proposed a treaty offensive and defensive, to which the English acceded, and which was concluded on the same day.

Clive was anxious to attack the French factory of Chandernagore; but the soubahdar, willing to see the French in his dominions, as a counterpoise to the too powerful English, resisted, and made such a demonstration of force as deterred the English from the attempt. Clive maintained that either a treaty of neutrality with that French station, or an immediate attack upon it, was essential to the security of English interests, and he proposed one, which the French said they must refer to the president at Pondicherry, but which Clive signed definitively. Watson, who always found scruples for refusing to do that upon which Clive was bent, or reason for performing what Clive hesitated to undertake, refused his signature. When Clive was for attacking Chandernagore, Watson refused, without the consent of the viceroy, which he knew would not be given. Large reinforcements arrived at this time for the English, and they refused to ratify the treaty with the French of Chandernagore. While the English were uncertain how to act in reference to Chandernagore, they became apprised of the facts that the government of Pondicherry was opposed to neutrality, and merely desired, by negotiation, to gain time, while they were instigating the viceroy to rely on them, and forming an alliance to expel the English at last. The prince, however, was alarmed by the invasion and capture of Delhi by Ahmed Shah, the Abdallee, and the rumour that the invader had determined to march against Bengal. In his consternation, he sent to the English, entreating their aid, and showing his desire to gain it on almost any terms. A council was called, at which the feeble Mr. Drake, who had run away from Calcutta, presided: Mr. Becher, Major Kilpatrick, and Colonel Clive were the other members. It was then debated whether an attack should be made on Chandernagore. Clive gives the following amusing account of the way in which the council argued and voted:—"Mr. Becher gave his opinion for a neutrality, Major Kilpatrick, for a neutrality; he himself gave his opinion for the attack of

the place; Mr. Drake gave an opinion that nobody could make anything of. Major Kilpatrick then asked him, whether he thought the forces and squadron could attack Chandernagore and the nabob's army at the same time?—he said, he thought they could; upon which Major Kilpatrick desired to withdraw his opinion, and to be of his. They voted Mr. Drake's no opinion at all; and Major Kilpatrick and he being the majority, a letter was written to Admiral Watson, desiring him to co-operate in the attack on Chandernagore."

Drake was a man without patriotism or honour. His sole object was to be allowed to preside quietly in Calcutta, at the head of the council, and turn the trading affairs of the company to some account, and his own to results more profitable. He was jealous of Clive, intrigued with the directors in London and he council in Madras, to have Clive's independent command withdrawn, and for that officer either to be placed under his orders, or removed from Bengal. Incredible as it may seem, that any man who had deserted his duty and dishonoured his country, as Drake had done, could desire to remove the only officer capable of making head against the enemy, such was the fact. He, therefore, opposed all Clive's movements; and Admiral Watson, seeing that the counsels on shore were so divided, had the more scope for his perpetually recurring conscientious scruple against any measure either for negotiation or arms proposed by that able and indomitable man. The following statement of Clive's instructions, and of extracts of Drake's letters for the suppression of Clive's independent authority, will account to the reader for all the difficulties which arose among the English themselves whenever Clive proposed any new undertaking:—"The orders given to the admiral and Colonel Clive when they left Madras were, to obtain full reparation of all injuries, and eventually to attack the tyrant in his capital. The council, on the 8th of January, advised the court of directors of the recapture of Calcutta, and, on the 31st, of the success against Hoogly. In the latter despatch, they adverted to the instructions from the president at Fort St. George, directing that Colonel Clive, as commander of all the forces, might be furnished with plans for a treaty with the nabob, having placed four lacs of rupees at his command, and empowered him to deviate from the whole or part of such plans, should he consider them to be inconsistent with the company's interests. The council at Calcutta appeared to view with strong feelings of jealousy the position in which Clive stood towards them by virtue of those instructions. They remarked, in their letter

to the directors, that 'the authority the select committee at Fort St. George have assumed, in appointing Colonel Clive commander-in-chief of the forces in Bengal, is so unaccountable, that we cannot avoid taking notice of it as an encroachment of the rights and trusts invested in us.' Notwithstanding the important services Clive had already rendered, and the probability of the nabob's advancing towards Calcutta, the council added, 'We have required of Colonel Clive to recede from the independent powers given him by the select committee, but he has refused to surrender that authority; we must therefore leave it to you, honourable sirs, to take notice of so injurious a conduct in your servants on the coast.'" Adverting to the powers which he possessed, he stated to the court of directors, in a letter dated "the camp near Calcutta:" "All propositions the council make will be attended to; and, for my part, you may be assured that, notwithstanding my independent command, I shall endeavour to maintain a perfect harmony with them, and act throughout with their participation. They thought proper, some time ago, to demand a surrender of my commission as commander-in-chief, and that I would put myself under their orders. While I looked upon myself as obliged to refuse, in justice to those who had entrusted me with such powers, I represented that I had no intention of making use of any independent powers, unless they induced me to it by necessity, for we had but one common interest to pursue, which was that of the company, and as long as that was kept in view, they would always find me ready to follow their instructions.' Colonel Clive's communication appears to have been governed by a just sense of the position in which he was placed, and to have manifested every disposition to act in harmony with the council, who felt aggrieved at their power having been set aside. At such a juncture, all personal feeling should have been waived for the common good, especially in favour of an officer who had evinced such qualifications."\*

This correspondence, thus quoted and commented upon, shows that from the first moment of his success at Bengal, the old council thwarted him, anxious for any compromise, so that they might pursue their private gains. The men who fled with the women when Calcutta was besieged, leaving the supreme posts of government and military direction vacant, were not likely to consent to any course of action of a bold and vigorous nature

\* Auber's *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. ii.; pp. 56—59.

to avenge the murder of their countrymen, or vindicate the honour of their country. They longed for a money compromise which they should largely share, and of the division of which they should have the patronage. Patriotism and honour were words of no meaning to them. Having from the beginning of Clive's expedition acted in that spirit, they looked with much animosity upon the projected attack at Chandernagore, that expedition and all other military undertakings tending to keep Clive with his independent commission in the province, and to increase his renown, influence, and perhaps his direct power, which was ultimately the case. Clive, however, had made up his mind to drive the French from Bengal, and he lost no time in carrying his purpose into effect. The intrigues which followed the events just related, and which surrounded the indomitable Clive, who was the life and soul of English enterprise, were complicated, intricate, and unprincipled. The native powers, the French, and the English, all endeavoured to deceive one another, and all were unscrupulous in the means which they employed. It has become the fashion among English writers—a fashion set by Mill—to traduce the character of the British on all occasions of temptation during the trials which at that period beset them. Much injustice is done to the Anglo-Indians of that day, by their countrymen of the present age. Impartial justice demands at all events a verdict in their favour when they are compared with either French or natives. The French showed far less honour and political morality than the English, and the conduct of natives of all ranks, sects, and classes was profoundly corrupt, treacherous, venal, and cruel. Princes, diplomatists, generals, merchants, and people were utterly without honour or principle, with rare exceptions. The course of conduct generally pursued by them was so perfidious and wicked, that where a simple and direct procedure would have better served their purposes, they preferred chicane, meanness, cowardice and folly. They exemplified the truth of the saying, "*Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*" They reaped as they sowed, nabob, soubahdar and people: a judicial vengeance politically befel them. It would be an endless task to unravel the many skeins of artifice which were spun around the policy of natives, French, and English at this time. Let it suffice, to observe that Clive's skilful manoeuvres and bold schemes defeated the coalesced French and natives, and that, finally, the French were driven from Bengal.

## CHAPTER LXXIII.

## DETHRONEMENT OF SURAJ-AD-DOWLAH—BATTLE OF PLASSEY—THE ENGLISH MASTERS OF BENGAL.

THE defeat and humiliation of the French left the British no European rivals in Bengal. There were still other European factories and settlements, but there was no prospect, and scarcely any possibility of their possessors rising to great power, or of even attempting to dispute the position and influence of the English. The agreements entered into by the latter with the soubahdar upon the expulsion of the French, and in connection with that event, were not fulfilled by the native government to the satisfaction of the conquerors, and hence disputes arose which led to war, and to the final conquest of Bengal by the British. Modern writers, especially upon the continent of Europe, allege that these quarrels were fomented by the English, in order to find a pretext for pushing their conquests; and Clive is especially accused of having been the evil genius of this policy. In support of this view, much reliance is placed upon the statement of Clive, which he made to the House of Commons, that, "after Chandernagore was resolved to be attacked, he repeatedly said to the committee, as well as to others, that they could not stop there, but must go further; that, having established themselves by force, and not by consent of the nabob, he would endeavour to drive them out again; that they had numberless proofs of his intentions, many upon record; and that he did suggest to Admiral Watson and Sir George Pococke, as well as to the committee, the necessity of a revolution; that Mr. Watson and the gentlemen of the committee agreed upon the necessity of it; and that the management of that revolution was, with consent of the committee, left to Mr. Watts, who was resident at the nabob's capital, and himself; that great dissatisfaction arising among Suraj-ad-Dowlah's troops, Meer Jaffier was pitched upon to be the person to place in the room of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, in consequence of which a treaty was formed." Clive never intended to intimate, by what he thus stated, that the idea of deposing the soubahdar arose with the English: the fact was otherwise. The English only took up a suggestion made by certain of the soubahdar's subjects; and, as Lord Clive intimates in his statement just quoted, and as he elsewhere declared, he was actuated, in falling in with the plans of the conspirators, by the necessity of the case. The soubahdar never intended to fulfil any of his agreements: he hated and feared the

English too much ever to be at ease while they held power and influence in Bengal. Lord Macaulay describes his state of minds and proceedings at this period in terms as correct as expressive:—

"The French were now vanquished; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed. The next day, he sent a present of jewels to Bussy, exhorting that distinguished officer to hasten to protect Bengal 'against Clive, the daring in war, on whom,' says his highness, 'may all bad fortune attend.' He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and threatened to impale him. He again sent for Watts, and begged pardon for the insult. In the meantime, his maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company, had disgusted all classes of his subjects—soldiers, traders, civil functionaries, the proud and ostentatious Mohammedans, the timid, supple, and parsimonious Hindoos. A formidable conspiracy was formed against him, in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance; Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of his troops; and Jugget Seit,\* the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malcontents at Moorshedabad, and the committee at Calcutta. In the committee there was much hesitation; but Clive's voice was given for the conspirators, and his vigour and firmness bore down all opposition. It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Suraj-ad-Dowlah, and to place Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. . . . The odious vices of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which our trade must have been exposed had he continued to reign, appear to us fully to justify the resolution of deposing him."

"The odious vices of Suraj," in spite of Lord Macaulay's opinion to the contrary, afforded

\* Properly, "Set."

no justification whatever to the English for the part they took, neither did they rest their conduct on any such foolish ground. "The wrongs which the English had suffered at his hand," would have afforded as little justification for their connection with the conspiracy as his odious vices. Suraj had compensated these wrongs, and placed himself not only on terms of amity, but alliance with those whom he had so foully injured. Neither did the British rest their procedure upon any wrongs endured by them in the previous war. "The dangers to which our trade must have been exposed," is too vague an allegation to justify an ally for entering into a conspiracy; but there is no doubt a conviction that such dangers impended, influenced the committee at Calcutta. Clive, by whose advice the overtures of the conspirators were entertained, based his policy upon the facts that the faithless tyrant had broken treaty with the British, and intrigued for their overthrow with the French in the Carnatic, and at the court of the Deccan; and Clive also rested his policy on the obvious truth that a man so vindictive, foolish, and capricious as Suraj, could never be a safe ally, and would always prove a treacherous foe as he had already proved himself to be. The clear evidence afforded that the infuriated prince was resolved to attempt the expulsion of the English at the first favourable moment, and had already set on foot traitorous designs, thereby violating all his engagements, afforded better justification for the desire and purpose to depose him than that which Lord Macaulay urges in Clive's defence. The first ostensible cause of dispute was the refusal of Suraj to deliver up certain French who had collected at Cossimbazar. The nabob furnished Mr. Law,\* the chief of the French factory there, with arms, ammunition, and even money, and sent him and his people to Bahar. Clive detached a part of his army to intercept the fugitives, and incensed as well as alarmed the nabob by the boldness of such a measure. From this incident began open altercations between the British and Suraj, of such a nature as plainly portended not only a speedy breach of the alliance, but open war.

The plot referred to in the quotation from Lord Macaulay, was one of the fruits of this state of things. It was not the first conspiracy formed against Suraj by his own subjects and officers, nor were the proposals which arose out of it the first made to the English by the nabob's subjects against him; but the project of Meer Jaffier appeared to the British the most feasible, or possibly "the

pear was then ripe." Meer Jaffier was not actually in the employment of Suraj, as the quotation from Lord Macaulay would indicate, when he first opened communications with the English. He had been deposed, and in a manner likely to make him a rebel. That chief was, however, a person of too much consequence to remain long out of the public service, for he had held high rank in the army of Ali Verdi, to whose sister he had been married. His rank was that of an independent military chief, in which anomalous position he raised and paid his army, which nominally was in the service of the nabob, but really regarded as its chief the general who recruited and paid it.

When negotiations were fully opened between the conspirators at Moorshedabad and the English at Calcutta, co-operation was agreed upon in manner and on terms which have been much censured by historians. The English senate resounded during many sessions of the last century with denunciations of the venality and treachery of the committee at Calcutta during these transactions; and the English press threw forth innumerable sheets filled with reclamations and abuse of the British chiefs. Lord Macaulay, who vindicates the deposition of the nabob, and the coalition of the English and the native party in the revolt of the latter, condemns Clive for writing soothing letters to the nabob and keeping up the semblance of amity. It must be obvious to every reflecting reader, that if it were right for the English to co-operate in the conspiracy at all, it was necessary to carry out their project by preserving appearances until the hour arrived for throwing off the alliance openly. His lordship is obviously inconsistent in excusing the one part taken by the English and censuring the other. Whatever be the merits of the case, Clive did no more than English diplomatists, and all other diplomatists, European and Oriental, have done ever since—conceal the purpose of their governments to throw off an alliance until opportune occasion. Governments with which Lord Macaulay has been connected, and which have had all the service of his peculiar rhetoric, have shown as much laxity in the ethics of their diplomacy.

Probably no part of the conduct of the English has been so severely handled by moral critics, as the pecuniary bargain made with Meer Jaffier by the Calcutta committee. Jaffier readily undertook to pay large demands made by the English. In name of compensation for losses by the capture of Calcutta, 10,000,000 rupees were promised to the English company, 5,000,000 rupees to English inhabitants, 2,000,000 to the Indians, and

\* For an account of whom see chapter on the "French East India Company."



700,000 to the Armenians. These sums were specified in the formal treaty. Over and beside this, it was resolved by the committee of the council—that is, the small number of individuals by whom the business was performed—that a donation of 2,500,000 rupees should be asked for the squadron; and another of equal amount for the army. “When this was settled,” says Lord Clive, “Mr. Becher (a member) suggested to the committee, that he thought that committee, who managed the great machine of government, was entitled to some consideration, as well as the army and navy.” Such a proposition, in such an assembly, could not fail to appear eminently reasonable. It met with general approbation. Mr. Becher informs us, that the sums received were 280,000 rupees by Mr. Drake, the governor; 280,000 by Colonel Clive; and 240,000 each, by himself, Mr. Watts, and Major Kilpatrick, the inferior members of the committee. The terms obtained in favour of the company were, that all the French factories and effects should be given up; that the French should be for ever excluded from Bengal; that the territory surrounding Calcutta to the distance of six hundred yards beyond the Mahratta ditch, and all the land lying south of Calcutta as far as Calpee, should be granted them on zemindary tenure, the company paying the rents in the same manner as other zemindars.

Mr. Mill, with an impartiality and justice of which he is too often very sparing where the conduct of the company's servants is concerned, makes the following critique upon this pecuniary arrangement, on account of which Clive and the council have been so frequently stigmatised as venal and corrupt:—“These presents, which were afterwards made use of by the personal enemies of Clive, to effect his annoyance and attempt his ruin, detract much from the splendour of his reputation, and reflect discredit upon all who were parties to their acceptance. That general, admiral, and members of the select committee, were alike influenced by a grasping and mercenary spirit is undeniable, and they seized, with an avidity which denoted a lamentable absence of elevated principles, upon an unexpected opportunity of realizing princely fortunes. At the same time, many considerations may be urged in their excuse, and a more disinterested conduct would have exhibited in them, a very extraordinary exception to the prevailing practices and feelings of the times. The servants of the company had never been forbidden to receive presents from the natives of rank, and as they were very ill paid, it was understood that they were at liberty to pay themselves in any manner they could which

did not injure their employers. The making of presents was an established practice amongst the natives, and is one which they even yet consider as a necessary part of friendly or formal intercourse, and although, agreeably to their notions, it is most incumbent on the inferior to approach his superior with an offering, yet on great public occasions, and especially upon any signal triumph, the distribution of liberal donations to the army and the chief officers of the court is a natural result. There was nothing more than customary, therefore, in the gift of large sums of money by Meer Jaffier to those to whom he was indebted for his accession; and, as there was neither law nor usage opposed to the acceptance of his donations by the servants of the company, and as they were avowedly expected and openly received, there was nothing dishonest in the transaction. That the amount of the presents was excessive, may be attributed, in some degree, to the erroneous opinion entertained probably by Meer Jaffier, and certainly by the company's servants, of the great wealth in the treasury of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, which admitted of such deduction. With a just regard to circumstances and seasons, therefore, it is unjust to expect from the servants of the company a lofty disregard of personal advantage, although they would have merited more unqualified admiration had they disdained their private enrichment in the noble aim of promoting the public good: much unhappiness would have been avoided by themselves, much misery would have been spared to Bengal.” That many of the persons engaged in these arrangements were actuated by motives the most selfish and venal, the minor transactions connected with them incidentally reveal. The discussion which arose in the committee as to how much its inferior members were to receive, is a case in point. The distribution of 240,000 rupees each to Becher, Watts, and Kilpatrick, led to a dispute, which Clive thus accounted for and described:—“Upon this being known, Mr. Watson replied, that he was entitled to a share in that money. He (Clive) agreed in opinion with the gentlemen, when this application was made, that Mr. Watson was not one of the committee, but at the same time did justice to his services, and proposed to the gentlemen to contribute as much as would make his share equal to the governor's and his own; that about three or four consented to it, the rest would not.”

In order to carry out the compact, the English were to make open war, and advancing a small force, the General Meer Jaffier would join it at Cutwa with his own troops, and as many other detachments from the

nabob's army, as he might be able to gain over through the instrumentality of other military malcontents. Clive put himself at the head of a very small body of men, and marched to Cutwa, but on arriving at the rendezvous, he found no allies. This disquieted him, for he had but little confidence in the courage, capacity, or sincerity of the conspirators. His disquietude was increased by letters from Moorshedabad, informing some of the natives in his camp, that the conspiracy had been revealed to the nabob, and that Meer Jaffier had only saved his life, by promising to aid with his best endeavours the prosecution of the war against the English. These tidings were soon followed by a letter from Meer Jaffier himself, informing Clive that the nabob, suspecting some designs against his throne, had compelled him to swear fidelity upon the Koran. The general pleaded his oath as a reason for not having fulfilled his engagement so far, but declared that on the day of battle he would go over to Clive with his army. This epistle furnished an illustration of Mohammedan casuistry. The oath of fidelity upon the Koran preserved so far the fealty of the rebel chief, that he would not at once go over to his ally, but would, nevertheless, hold friendly communications with him, and propose new modes of destroying his master's interests, which on the day of battle he promised to betray. Clive no longer trusted Meer Jaffier, who was playing a double game. He had committed the English to an undertaking which they would not have ventured upon without his aid; yet his own purpose was to observe neutrality, and play off both the forces, that of the British and that of the nabob, against one another, and make his own terms with the ultimate conqueror. Clive, with all his impetuous and rash boldness, felt the desperate nature of his position, and was depressed. He afterwards admitted the depression he felt, and avowed that he "thought it extremely hazardous to pass a river which is only fordable in one place, march a hundred and fifty miles up the country, and risk a battle, when, if a defeat ensued, not one man would have returned to tell it."

Thus perplexed, he summoned a council of war which decided against passing the river. Clive declared that if he had followed its advice, the result would have been the ruin of the East India Company. It would not, however, have been reasonable on his part to expect the council to come to any other opinion than they did, which was in harmony with his own, a fact which he took unusual pains to let them know before they gave the decision. It is the custom in councils of war for the

junior officer to give his opinion first, so that, uninfluenced by the authority of his seniors, he may express his own conviction. On this occasion, Clive first declared his judgment against crossing the river, and so great was his influence that this decision was immediately concurred in, so that in fact it was not a council of war, but the opinion of Clive himself, echoed by his junior officers.

Orme relates that "after the council dispersed, he retired alone into the adjoining grove, where he continued an hour in deep meditation: and gave orders, on his return to his quarters, that the army should cross the river in the morning."\* It is probable that Orme had this account from the lips of Clive himself. The next morning the army crossed the river, and at midnight arrived at Plassey. Before Clive had heard from Meer Jaffier that the soubahdar† had sworn him on the Koran, the faithless general was thus addressed by his English ally, through Mr. Watts, the English resident at the court of Suraj:—"Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing. I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left." Meer Jaffier was not brave, and the force of the great English captain was so inferior, that, notwithstanding, the mighty name already gained by its commander, Meer Jaffier was discouraged. Had the army of Clive been twice as numerous, the wily Mohammedan would have proved a more prompt ally. Some historians accuse Meer Jaffier of having himself awakened the suspicions of the soubahdar against others of the confederates, that he might, if necessary, for his own purposes betray them also, but it is not probable that a politician so timid, would venture upon so bold a procedure. The suspicions of the viceroy were actually aroused by M. Law, who was led to suspect the plot, through information connected with the French agents at the court. He consequently urged the prince to retain French troops about his person, but his cowardice and vacillation prevented his following such counsel, for he was afraid of exasperating the English, yet more afraid of offending his own people who were jealous of foreign troops, and he had not implicit confidence in the French themselves.

Before the battle of Plassey was fought, or the little English army had crossed their rubicon, while yet everything depended upon

\* Vol. ii. p. 170.

† Suraj-ad-Dowlah is called soubahdar and nabob indiscriminately by historians, although the names are not synonymous; a nabob properly being deputy of the soubahdar, as the latter is viceroy of the Mogul.

the privacy with which the conspirators carried on affairs with their English allies, a danger threatened the whole scheme, of the most alarming nature. The secret negotiations between Clive and Meer Jaffier, and the ostensible diplomatic business between the council at Calcutta and the soubahdar, were carried on by Mr. Watts, the English resident at his court, and one Omichund, a Bengalee. He had been a merchant at Calcutta, and suffered heavy loss when the place was captured by Suraj, but, finding favour with the tyrant, he was brought to Moorshedabad and compensated for the losses he had sustained. Notwithstanding this unusual generosity on the part of Suraj, Omichund betrayed him. It was convenient both to the soubahdar and the English to have a person of Omichund's parts, experience, and knowledge of the English as a medium of transacting political business, especially as politics and commerce were so interwoven in the relations of the two powers. Omichund was rich, but exceedingly avaricious. He had no honour, no loyalty, and was ready to sell either prince or stranger to the other. He believed that the English could pay the better price, and would in the long run succeed, for he was far-sighted in politics, and a shrewd judge of character. He readily joined the conspirators; for, having a talent for intrigue, he thus found scope for it. Considering the English good paymasters, and more worthy of trust than his master, he was prepared to betray the latter for a price, which was agreed upon amongst the conspirators, and between him and them and the English. He accordingly assisted Mr. Watts in all the plots carried on at the court of Bengal, and was instrumental by his intimate knowledge of Suraj's mental habits and character, and by his own plausible manner and ingenious mind, in soothing the anger of the soubahdar, and lulling his suspicions of his own court, upon which the prince, utterly faithless himself, placed scarcely any reliance. Omichund appears to have gained more influence over him than any of his courtiers, and he wielded it in the interest of the projected revolution.

When all was ready for action, and Clive's little army was committed to the struggle, the mercenary and faithless Bengalee informed Mr. Watts that unless the English consented to pay him, as an additional bribe, the enormous sum—especially in those days, and in the circumstances of the English in Bengal—of three hundred thousand pounds sterling, he would disclose the conspiracy. Clive was appalled by the villainy of the wretch, for he had from the first been one of the most zealous advocates of a revolution, and was the person

through whom the proposals came to the English to aid in effecting that revolution. If the English refused, Mr. Watts, Meer Jaffier, and all concerned, natives or English, in the power of Suraj would be seized and visited with the extreme of torture. It was the opinion of Mr. Watts, and of Meer Jaffier, that Omichund would certainly fulfil his threat, unless the English gave him such security as satisfied him that he should receive the vast treasure he demanded, which, with his previous demands, would probably reach half a million sterling. Although he had been already compensated by the soubahdar for his losses at Calcutta, he contrived to conceal that fact from the English, and had already obtained a pledge of compensation from them. The committee at Calcutta were paralyzed, but the ready courage and resources of Clive never failed. He undertook the management of this apparently unconquerable danger, and succeeded in satisfying Omichund, so as to secure his silence, and yet of punishing the traitor, so as to deprive him of all for which he had dealt so greedily a bargain. All that Omichund required was accordingly done, without any dissatisfaction with his treachery having been expressed to him, either through the resident Mr. Watts or by direct correspondence. He was treated as if it were natural and proper that he should make the most of his secret, and be a chief sharer in the spoil. This disarmed him of all suspicion that the English had any plan for outwitting him. Supposing that they regarded his conduct as that which any individual among them would himself pursue, in like circumstances, he had no doubt that they would, on the score of his treachery, refuse to pay, or promise to be paid by the prospective nabob, all his demands. The security which Omichund sought was an article in a secret treaty between Meer Jaffier and the English, conferring upon him all he had required, and he demanded the perusal of the treaty itself. Clive drew up two treaties, one on white paper, the other on red. In the former, which was the real one, no mention was made of Omichund; in the latter, which was fictitious, the payment of his demands was made a stipulation. Lord Macaulay is very severe upon Clive in this instance, in which severity he is supported by nearly every writer of the day who touches this episode of Anglo-Indian conquest.

It is surprising that the conduct of Clive should be denounced so sternly, especially by politicians who uphold deeds far more questionable when a party object of modern times is to be served by so doing. Clive had always intended to act honestly by the perfidious Hindoo, nor had the council at Calcutta ever

for a moment contemplated an injustice to him. He was too useful and powerful to be the object of any meditated treachery by the English; but when they found him false, and that he was about to use the snares he had placed in their hands to catch the nabob for the purpose of their own destruction, they might well throw the meshes over himself. Even, after all, when the English had him at their mercy, they treated him with indulgence.

Before Clive could accomplish his purpose by means of the duplicate treaty, a difficulty arose in consequence of Admiral Watson's refusing to sign the fictitious one. For this the admiral is praised by most writers to the disparagement of Clive, but the admiral had always a point of conscience or of doubt whenever the bold and fertile spirit of Clive presented to him a grand conception or a manly enterprise. Watson had little responsibility beyond keeping his ships safe, driving off those of the enemy, then an easy matter, or bearing troops from one port to another. Upon the presidents and commanders on shore the real responsibility lay, and they often met with embarrassment from the tardy views and want of enterprise on the part of the royal naval commanders. Watson, although an able naval officer, showed no competency beyond that; and was a clog and impediment to the enterprise of Clive. Some of the panegyrists of Watson, whose praise was expended in that direction as indirect censure of Clive, doubt if he ever concurred in the intrigue for the deposition of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, but there is incontestable evidence that he approved of it. If the admiral felt no qualm of conscience in carrying on an intrigue with Omichund to dethrone his sovereign, thus countenancing, on the part of the wily Hindoo, treachery which admitted of no apology or palliation, it is strange that his conscience should become so tender when an expedient such as Clive resorted to, as a *protection against treachery*, was presented for his opinion. Probably if any other member of the council but Clive had contrived the subtle trick, Watson might have admired its ingenuity, and have considered it an appropriate mode, under the circumstances, of snatching from the hands of a double traitor the reward he had so ingeniously determined to clutch. One may fairly suppose this of the admiral when perusing his correspondence with Clive, expressing his good wishes for the success of a conspiracy which could only prosper by the English assenting to the treachery of Omichund against his own master. However influenced, Watson refused to sign the red treaty. Macaulay says that Clive forged his signature. Mill throws the imputation upon the whole com-

mittee. At all events, the treaty was presented in such form as to deceive the Hindoo, with all the sagacity for which Orme gives him credit. After the battle of Plassey and the triumphant progress of Clive through Bengal, Omichund was undeceived, and he found that his perfidy had overreached itself, and that in Clive he had encountered an intellect as subtle as his own. As this episode in British Indian history has given rise to much controversy, especially since the days of Mill, it will interest the reader to place before him the bitter animadversion of that writer, and the calm and candid reply to it of Professor Wilson. All the accusations against Clive and the council, from the days of Mill to Macaulay, are presented in brief in the following note to Mill's history: \*—"Among the Hindoo merchants established at Calcutta was Omichund, 'a man,' says Mr. Orme, 'of great sagacity and understanding,' who had traded to a vast amount, and acquired an enormous fortune. 'The extent of his habitation,' continues Mr. Orme, 'divided into various departments, the number of his servants continually employed in various occupations, and a retinue of armed men in constant pay, resembled more the state of a prince than the condition of a merchant. His commerce extended to all parts of Bengal and Bahar, and by presents and services he had acquired so much influence with the principal officers of the Bengal government, that the presidency, in times of difficulty, used to employ his mediation with the nabob. This pre-eminence, however, did not fail to render him the object of much envy.'† When the alarm, excited by the hostile designs of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, threw into consternation the minds of Mr. Drake and his council, among other weak ideas which occurred to them, one was to secure the person of Omichund, lest, peradventure, he should be in concert with their enemies. He was seized and thrown into confinement. His guards, believing that violence, that is, dishonour, would next fall upon his house, set fire to it, after the manner of Hindoos, and slaughtered the inmates of his harem. Notwithstanding this, when Mr. Holwell endeavoured to parley with the nabob, he employed Omichund to write letters to his friends, importuning them to intercede, in that extremity, with the prince. At the capture, though his person was liberated, his valuable effects and merchandise were plundered. No less than four hundred thousand rupees in cash were found in his treasury. When an order was published that such of the English as had escaped the Black Hole might

\* Vol. iii. book iv. chap. iii. p. 135.

† Orme, vol. ii. p. 50.

return to their homes, they were supplied with provisions by Omichund, 'whose intercession,' says Orme, 'had probably procured their return.' Omichund, upon the ruin of Calcutta, followed the nabob's army, and soon acquired a high degree of confidence both with the nabob's favourite, and with himself. After the recovery of Calcutta, when the nabob, alarmed at the attack of his camp, entered into negotiation, and concluded a treaty, Omichund was one of the principal agents employed. And when Mr. Watts was sent to Moorshedabad as agent at the durbar (court) of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, 'he was accompanied,' says Mr. Orme (ii. 137), 'by Omichund, whose conduct in the late negotiation had effaced the impression of former imputations, insomuch that Mr. Watts was permitted to consult and employ him without reserve on all occasions.' He was employed as a main instrument in all the intrigues with Jaffier. It was never surmised that he did not second, with all his efforts, the projects of the English; it was never denied that his services were of the utmost importance. Mr. Orme says expressly (p. 182), that 'his tales and artifices prevented Suraj-ad-Dowlah from believing the representations of his most trusty servants, who early suspected, and at length were convinced, that the English were confederated with Jaffier.' When the terms of compensation for the losses sustained by the capture of Calcutta were negotiated between Mr. Watts and Meer Jaffier, three millions of rupees were set down to Omichund, which, considering the extent of his property, and that 'most of the best houses in Calcutta were his,'\* was probably not more than his loss. Looking forward to the rewards, which he doubted not that Jaffier, if successful, would bestow upon those of the English who were the chief instruments of his exaltation; estimating also the importance of his own services, and the risk, both of life and of fortune, which, in rendering those services, he had incurred, Omichund conceived that he too might put in his claim for reward; and, according to the example of his countrymen, resolved not to injure himself by the modesty of his demand. He asked a commission of five per cent. on the money which should be received from the nabob's treasury, and a fourth part of the jewels; but agreed, upon hearing the objections of Mr. Watts, to refer his claims to the committee. When the accounts were sent to Calcutta, the sum to be given to Omichund, even as compensation for his losses, seemed a very heavy grievance to men who panted for more to themselves. To men whose minds were in such a state, the great

demands of Omichund appeared (the reader will laugh—but they did literally appear) a crime. They were voted a crime; and so great a crime, as to deserve to be punished—to be punished, not only by depriving him of all reward, but depriving him of his compensation, that compensation which was stipulated for to everybody: it was voted that Omichund should have nothing. They were in his power, however, therefore he was not to be irritated. It was necessary he should be deceived. Clive, whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang, proposed that two treaties with Meer Jaffier should be drawn up, and signed, one, in which satisfaction to Omichund should be provided for, which Omichund should see; another, that which should really be executed, in which he should not be named. To his honour be it spoken, Admiral Watson refused to be a party in this treachery. He would not sign the false treaty; and the committee forged his name. When Omichund, upon the final adjustment, was told that he was cheated, and found that he was a ruined man, he fainted away, and lost his reason. He was from that moment insane. Not an Englishman, not even Mr. Orme, has yet expressed a word of sympathy or regret."

To this, Professor Wilson replies:—"In this statement some very material circumstances are omitted, which palliate, if they do not justify the deception that was practised. Before the attack upon Calcutta, Omichund was in friendly correspondence with the ministers and servants of the nawab, and upon its being taken, was treated with civility by Suraj-ad-Dowlah, whom he accompanied to Moorshedabad, and there obtained from him repayment of the money which in the plunder of Calcutta had been carried off from his house. Notwithstanding this, he was one of the first, through his connection, no doubt, with the Hindoo ministers, and Sets, the banker, to engage in the plot against Suraj-ad-Dowlah. The English had, therefore, no great reason to look upon him as their friend; and as it is evident that he was a stranger to every principle except love of money, there is nothing in his character to awaken any sympathy for his fate. Still it is undeniable that thus far he merited no treachery, and that his services were entitled to consideration. It was intended to reimburse his losses and remunerate his assistance; but his want of principle instigated him to enrich himself by the secret to which he had been admitted, and when all was prepared for action, he waited on Mr. Watts, the agent at Cossimbazar, and threatened to acquaint the nawab with the conspiracy, unless a donation was secured to him of thirty lacs of rupees, about £350,000. The demand was

\* Orme, vol. ii. p. 128.

exorbitant, and infinitely beyond the amount of any losses he could have sustained by the plunder of Calcutta, for which losses also, it is to be remembered, he had already received compensation. Mr. Mill thinks it probably not more than his loss, because the best houses in Calcutta, according to Orme, were his. But admitting that they were of great value, which is not very likely, they were still his. Calcutta was not razed to the ground; the buildings were still there, and on its recapture had of course reverted to their owners. The claim was wholly inadmissible, and its unreasonableness was aggravated by the threat of treachery with which it was enforced. What was to be done? To have rejected it at once would have been followed by the certain murder of the company's servants at Cossimbazar, and of Meer Jaffier, with all his family and adherents, and by the probable defeat of the British projects and their destruction. The menaced treason of Omichund, and its fatal consequences, are scarcely adverted to in the preceding account, although it was that, and not the mere demand of extravagant compensation, which was naturally enough denounced by the committee as a crime, and determined to be worthy of punishment. Clive, who had all along advocated his cause, and defended his character, 'received with equal surprise and indignation the incontrovertible proofs offered of his guilt. Viewing him as a public enemy, he considered, as he stated at the period, and publicly avowed afterwards, every artifice that could deceive him to be not only defensible, but just and proper.' There may be a difference of opinion on this subject, and it would have been more for the credit of the European character that, however treacherously extorted, the promise should have been performed, the money should have been paid; but there can be no doubt, that, in order to appreciate with justice the conduct of Clive and the committee, the circumstance of Omichund's menaced treason should not be kept out of sight. As to the reputed effects of his disappointment upon his intellects and life, there is good reason to doubt their occurrence, for in the month of August following, Clive recommends him to the secret committee of the court of directors, as 'a person capable of rendering great services, and, therefore, not wholly to be discarded.'"<sup>\*</sup>

The opinion of Professor Wilson is subscribed by many persons of eminence in connection with India, as the author of this history has means of knowing. In the esteem of others equally eminent, the learned

Professor conceded too much as to the ethical impropriety of refusing the demand of Omichund when victory crowned the English arms. Such men as Elphinstone, Prinsep, &c., among the most competent of living men to pronounce an opinion on Indian affairs, take this view. Upon some of the severer attacks of Mill, Lord Macaulay himself, sufficiently severe, has made the following strictures:—"We can by no means agree with Sir John Malcolm, who is obstinately resolved to see nothing but honour and integrity in the conduct of his hero. But we can as little agree with Mr. Mill, who has gone so far as to say that Clive was a man 'to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang.' Clive seems to us to have been constitutionally the opposite of a knave, bold even to temerity, sincere even to indiscretion, hearty in friendship, open in enmity. Neither in his private life, nor in those parts of his public life in which he had to do with his countrymen, do we find signs of a propensity to cunning. On the contrary, in all the disputes in which he was engaged as an Englishman against Englishmen, from his boxing-matches in school to those stormy altercations in the India-house, and in parliament, amidst which his later years were passed, his very faults were those of a high and magnanimous spirit. The truth seems to have been, that he considered oriental politics as a game in which nothing was unfair. He knew that the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honour, with men who would give any promise without hesitation, and break any promise without shame, with men who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show that the great difference between oriental and European morality was constantly in his thoughts. He seems to have imagined, most erroneously, in our opinion, that he could effect nothing against such adversaries, if he was content to be bound by ties from which they were free; if he went on telling the truth, and hearing none; if he fulfilled, to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept an engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly, this man, in the other parts of his life an honourable English gentleman and a soldier, was no sooner matched against an Indian intriguer, than he became himself an Indian intriguer, and descended, without scruple, to falsehood, to hypocritical caresses, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands."

<sup>\*</sup> See *Life of Clive*, vol. i. p. 289.

Lord Macaulay does justice to Clive in the above quotation, so far as he complains of Mill's unqualified denunciation; but, however plausibly expressed, the remainder of the passage is a reply to the former portion. The mode adopted to explain the contradictions in the separate parts of Clive's life is, like most of his lordship's casuistry, ingenious and imposing; but it is not founded upon facts. The description given of Clive's ideas of the necessity of descending into an arena of fraud, and playing a part there appropriate to the position, when in competition with native diplomatists, was never avowed, and, it may be fearlessly said, was never entertained by Clive. Lord Macaulay is indebted to his own dextrous fancy for this mode of reconciling what he describes as the discrepant parts of Clive's life. There was no such discrepancy of character in the man. He would outwit a thief, by setting a trap for him, or pretending to connive at his villainy until the moment of arresting him arrived. He would countervail the diabolical treachery of a man like Omichund, in whose hands the fate of himself and of his country's interests were, by appearing to acquiesce in his demands, and turning his own tricks into pitfalls for himself; but he would not substitute documents, forge names, or resort to dishonourable averments, in order to carry a point in diplomacy, deceive a confiding and faithful ally, accomplish a scheme of personal aggrandizement, or achieve any object in itself either corrupt or virtuous. He did not hold the principle of doing evil that good might come, as applicable to oriental politics; but he believed all means lawful to escape the clutches of an assassin and robber. He regarded Suraj-ad-Dowlah in no better light, and, therefore, entered into alliance with a revolutionary party in that sovereign's dominions, which had plotted the deposition of their tyrant. He regarded Omichund as a man who played the part of a foul traitor, who would have given up Clive's countrymen and allies to massacre, if demands, which the English could not have complied with in justice to themselves or their allies, were not apparently acquiesced in. He considered the promise he made like that which a man makes when the knife of a highwayman is at his throat, and he acted as most men would act when such a danger must be eluded. Had there been other passages in Clive's Indian career bringing out such principles and motives as Lord Macaulay attributes to him, there would be propriety in viewing the transactions with Omichund as his lordship represents them, in reference to the motives and principles by which they were governed; but there is no evidence in the facts of Clive's Eastern career

to sustain the theory by which Lord Macaulay accounts for his conduct. His lordship, at the time he wrote his review of Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, had evidently not made himself thoroughly acquainted with its contents, nor had he, from other sources, placed before his mind the Indian career of Lord Clive as a whole—military, diplomatic, and administrative. There is sufficient in each department of Clive's Indian history to prove that he never regarded what was false and dishonourable in Europe as otherwise in Asia. To deceive an enemy in war or diplomacy, when that enemy obviously intended treachery, he considered fair; and the same course has been pursued in European warfare and diplomacy so often as to make it absurd to single Clive out for indignation. He did wrong, as other generals and statesmen do, from allowing the aims he had in view—aims in themselves right—to blind his judgment, and from the errors and passions incidental to human judgment and feeling, under circumstances of temptation and peril; but he did not place himself on a level with oriental politicians in matters of principle and honour, and justify himself in the adoption of one standard of morality in India and another in England.

Such were the intrigues which preceded the battle of Plassey, an account of which is indispensable in a correct narrative of the conquest of Bengal by the British, for they influenced all the results of that victory.

These events passed rapidly on while Clive was preparing for his expedition, and after he set out on his march. Before he reached Plassey, he sent a message to the soubahdar, setting forth the treasons in which his highness had been detected, and the wrongs inflicted on the British. Clive offered to refer these disputes to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier, and meantime he and his army would wait upon his highness for an answer. Arrived at Plassey, Clive took up his position on the skirt of a grove of mango trees about two miles square\*—one of those groves of fruit-trees so extensively planted by the natives in India. Near to Plassey there had been an intrenched camp of the soubahdar, and the evening previous to the arrival of Clive, Suraj-ad-Dowlah himself, with the main body of his army, arrived. These forces, united to the troops in camp, constituted a large army. It is difficult to state the precise number. Orme, who was there, represents the infantry as fifty thousand, the cavalry eighteen thousand, and fifty pieces of cannon. Lord Macaulay states the infantry to have been forty thousand in number, the cavalry fifteen thousand, and

\* This grove is still in existence, but greatly reduced in dimensions.



the artillery the same as in Orme's computation, with the addition of a few field-pieces belonging to the French, and worked by them. Clive himself, in his letter to the directors, estimated the forces of the enemy still lower, representing the infantry as thirty-five thousand, and the cavalry and artillery as of the same force named by Lord Macaulay. With these forces were all the chief generals of Bengal, and among them Meer Jaffier, whose heart failed him when the hour for forming a junction with Clive arrived. The force which Clive had to oppose to this huge army was three thousand men; of these about one thousand were British, one hundred topasses, and the rest sepoys. All were commanded by British officers, some of them, such as Eyre Coote, men of distinguished ability; and the whole of the troops were well disciplined.

Clive passed an anxious night, pacing to and fro in the mango grove, or pondering in his tent; for he knew that the morrow must decide the destinies of Bengal, of its ruler, of himself and his little army, and of the English in Eastern India. All night he heard the din and bustle of an oriental camp, and felt the influence of the peculiar murmuring sound which the voices and motions of a host on the eve of battle were calculated to produce. His opponent spent also a night of anxiety; he had cast the issue of dominion upon the tide of war, and the morning's light would reveal whether his fortune would ebb or flow. He was naturally distrustful, and the apprehensions attendant upon such a condition of mind were heightened by the belief that treason lurked within his lines. By some misconduct, guards were not posted at his tent during a portion of the night, and a wandering camp follower, not knowing whither he strayed, found himself in the monarch's tent, who, apprehensive of assassination, cried aloud with fear, spreading alarm among his chiefs.

The host of the despot was not eager for battle—no loyalty kindled enthusiasm, and the troops of Meer Jaffier were alienated, considering themselves bound only to the chief whose salt they eat. The name of Clive was itself a spell, which palsied the heart of many of the vaunting braves of the ostentatious ranks of Suraj. Many of Clive's officers, perhaps all, were more confident of success than Clive himself. They had trust in his genius and valour. He felt the tremendous responsibility of his position—a bullet or an arrow might lay him low, and the mere fact of his fall would cause despair among his cpoys, and inspire the enemy with confidence.

The sepoys of Clive's force felt no misgivings—they invested their leader with super-

human gifts, and expected to see some new phase of his power, before which the great host of the viceroy would disappear, as fallen branches and foliage swept onward by the inundations of the Ganges. The European soldiers were not confident of victory, but were resolute to deserve it. They looked wistfully forth for the eastern dawn to break. That dawn at last arose upon the unslumbering expectants of the conflict, and the battle of Plassey began, June 23, 1757.

Few native armies have appeared to the British so picturesque as that which advanced against the mango grove and the sheltering banks by which Clive's little band stood waiting for the onset. The infantry of Suraj was variously armed—some in the style of ancient India, others carried the weapons of European warfare. The bowmen formed their lines, as those of Cressy or Poitiers; but the turbaned heads and flowing drapery of these Eastern archers were far more picturesque. The musketeers carried their dusky weapons with less propriety and grace, and as men less skilful with their weapons. Many a line of swords and shields flashed in the morning's ray, and the sheen of lances displayed the pomp and reality of war.

The most singular sight presented to the British was the artillery. The guns were not only numerous but of heavy metal; they were all drawn by beautiful white oxen, whose movements were far more rapid than European nations would think likely with such animals yoked to field artillery. Behind every gun an elephant, well trained for the purpose, added to the celerity of the movement, by pushing with his great strength. These creatures were gaily caparisoned, and were magnificent specimens of their kind. The cavalry were mounted upon fine horses from upper Hindostan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. The men of all the force, especially of the cavalry, were fine specimens of the well-formed, tall statured soldiers of Upper Bengal.

Forth came the brilliant host. Firm and undaunted the little band of British heroes awaited their approach. The enemy, instead of advancing to close combat, halted, and opened a heavy fire of cannon; but so badly were the guns worked, that scarcely a shot told. The light French field-pieces were skilfully directed, but were not brought into sufficient play, the native leaders relying upon the great execution they expected to be made by their own ponderous ordnance.

The English artillery replied with considerable effect, disabling the enemy's cannon by killing or alarming the oxen and elephants, and throwing the native gunners into conse-



quent confusion. It was, however, to silence the efficient French pieces, which were served as gallantly as skilfully, that the English fire was chiefly directed.

The army of Suraj wasted time upon a fruitless cannonade, during which several of the best officers fell by the well-directed aim of the English gunners. At last Meer Meden, a general upon whom his highness placed the utmost reliance, and whose fidelity deserved the esteem in which he was held, received a mortal wound from a cannon-ball. He was borne to the tent of his highness, who avoided danger, and while the faithful officer explained the arrangements by which he supposed victory might be gained, he expired. Suraj, frantic with despair and grief, called for Meer Jaffier, whose troops remained in a species of armed neutrality on one flank of the soubahdar's line. Suraj took off his turban, and placed it at Meer Jaffier's feet—the most abject act of humiliation to which a Mussulman can stoop; he implored him to avenge the death of the faithful Meer Meden, and to rescue from the perils that beset him the grandson of Ali Verdi, by whose favour Jaffier had grown great.

The conspirator, unmoved by Suraj's tears, or humiliation, turned the moment to account, and advised him to retreat to the intrenchments. Another general officer, Mohan Lall, pointed out the certain destruction which must ensue if such counsel were followed; but the helpless Suraj gave the fatal order. While one portion of the army consequently made a retrograde movement, that commanded by Meer Jaffier remained stationary. Clive perceived the true state of the case, and ordered his whole force to advance, the 39th British regiment of infantry leading, with imposing line and dauntless bearing. Suraj, dull as he was, understood at a glance the inaction of Meer Jaffier, and the well-timed advance of Clive. He fled. Mounting a swift camel, attended by two thousand of his choicest cavalry, he forsook the field. Meer Jaffier drew off his troops from the line of battle. The rest of the multitude took to precipitate flight, casting away their arms. The French, with a gallantry beyond praise, endeavoured to rally the panic-stricken crowd in vain, and alone faced the advancing English; but as the alarm, and rout of their allies increased, the French were swept from the field, as the mountain rock borne downward by the avalanche; and these brave men were merged in the crowd, whose mad flight bore everything before it. The battle was over; the Bengalees fled without feeling the point of British steel. The pursuit was short but decisive; five hundred of the enemy perished,

but they fell chiefly under the good artillery practice of the English. Of the British, only seventy-two were put *hors de combat*; and of these only twenty-two were slain: scarcely as many were mortally wounded.

The 39th regiment was the most conspicuous portion of Clive's troops—it still bears the name of Plassey on its colours, and is proud of the motto, "*Primus in Indis*."

Lord Macaulay says, "Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action, but when he saw the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and when the battle was over sent his congratulations to his ally." This statement is astonishingly inaccurate. It is true that Meer Jaffier did not come over with his troops, which would have been difficult, but his treachery mainly conduced to the victory. There is no knowing how the battle would have issued, considering the disparity of forces, and the skill and bravery shown by the French, even with inactivity on the part of Jaffier's troops, if that officer had not given the fatal advice to the soubahdar to order a retreat to the trenches. When the retreat commenced, he remained stationary, but in such manner as betrayed his object so palpably that the prince immediately fled in despair, taking with him the *élite* of his army. Meer Jaffier accomplished all that his letter to Clive had promised. It was found after the battle, that while the cannonade was playing, he sent a letter to Clive advising the English chief to charge, and promising at that moment to withdraw his troops, which was probably all he could entrust his own soldiers to perform. The perfidy of Jaffier was the real cause of success; but for his assistance it is doubtful whether Clive would have brought away his little force from the field, far less was there a chance of victory. No battle fought by Clive gained him so much glory and emolument, in no battle in which he ever engaged, did the issue result less from any performance of his. It was the only battle in the preliminaries of which he showed hesitation, not merely hesitation of judgment, but want of confidence in his resources and his fortune, and the only one in which his chief reliance lay rather in the perfidy of a portion of the army opposed to him than in his own genius and the heroism of his troops. He doubtless did all that man could do in his circumstances, and everything he accomplished was performed well. The explanations between the two chiefs were mutually satisfactory. Clive urged Jaffier to hasten to Moorsshedabad (then the capital of Bengal), and prevent the possibility of Suraj rallying his forces, or

raising fresh levies. The revolutionary nabob followed this counsel and hastened forward. Meanwhile, the fugitive prince continued his flight to his capital. There, in a paroxysm of fear, he consulted all his courtiers, and followed the advice of none. Some urged him to surrender to the English, and throw himself on their mercy, as they were generous and relenting, as well as daring in war. Others appealed to his manhood and kingly pride, advising that he should assemble all that were faithful to him, place himself at their head, and fall upon the enemy, dying sword in hand or reconquering dominion and retrieving honour. His poltroon spirit shrunk from the manly counsel. A few advised him to place himself in the hands of the French in the Deccan, and to await the return of the tide of fortune to that nation, which they perceived would soon flow again, when he would be restored by their power, as they would always be the foes of a nabob friendly to the English. This counsel pleased him most, but was least popular among his friends. His indecision could resolve upon none of these schemes, until no course remained for his coward heart to choose, but ignominious flight once more. Meer Jaffier followed fast upon the fugitive, and when the besieging nabob entered Moorshedabad, Suraj was let down from a window of his palace. Accompanied, according to Orme, by one of his favourite concubines, and two attendants, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he entered a boat and rowed for Patna. Native writers describe his retreat as more leisurely, and having a train of elephants to bear his family and treasures. Clive arrived in a few days afterwards with a large escort, leaving his little army behind. He was received with great deference by Meer Jaffier and his confederates. A palace was assigned to the English captain, surrounded by beautiful grounds, and where there was camping accommodation for five hundred men, the number of his soldiers which accompanied him. The installation of Meer Jaffier as nabob of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa was his first care. He led the new ruler to the throne or chair of state, made the customary offerings, congratulated him on his exaltation, and then, through his interpreter, addressed the people, calling upon them to rejoice over the downfall of a tyrant, and the accession to power of a virtuous ruler.

The next care of the British chief was to demand from the regnant nabob the fulfilment of the treaty made during the period that the conspiracy was in progress. Up to this period, Omichund was ignorant of the artifice of the double treaty, and he presented himself

in high spirits, to obtain the sum, promise of which he had exacted under the threat of betraying the English to the viceroy. Mr. Scrafton was ordered by Clive to undeceive him; the result has been related on a former page.

Meer Jaffier did his best to carry out the terms of the treaty, and disburse the sums which he had contracted to pay; but the treasury of Moorshedabad was far from full. The desolating war carried on with the Maharrattas by the predecessors of Suraj, the military expenditure of that prince against the English, and his profligate waste in the excesses and extravagance to which he was addicted, had, rich as Bengal was, reduced the treasury to a low degree. By various expedients, such as the disposal of jewels and making part payment in jewels, Meer Jaffier made up a portion of the money, and engaged, at certain intervals, to pay further instalments until the debt was liquidated. More than three quarters of a million sterling in coined silver was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Calcutta. One hundred of the river boats were employed to convey the precious freight. The flotilla was conducted with much display—flags flying, drums beating, fireworks, brilliant as those of Bengal usually are, testified the satisfaction of the English, and the dissimulation of the courtiers of the new nabob, who regarded with horror and alarm the removal of so much treasure. It was remarkable that much of the coinage was European of an old date—such as the Venetians used when that people conducted the trade between Europe and India.

Clive was the object of adulation and homage such as can be rendered only by orientals. Presents of the most costly nature were lavished upon him. His temptations were great, and, although his share of the disbursements connected with the treaty was very large, his moderation was conspicuous: he literally walked between heaps of gold and silver, and piles of precious stones, in the treasury of Moorshedabad. He might have appropriated what he pleased: he was invited—even urged, to do so, probably with no sincerity, but it was the interest of the party of the revolution to gratify him, for he had been the only Englishman in Bengal capable of bringing it to pass. Calcutta witnessed a great accession of wealth: the company profited by the political and territorial advantages won by Clive's genius; the company's officers were enriched by the gifts. The craven creatures of the council of Calcutta, who had fled before the name of Suraj Dowlah, in the transactions which issued in such stupendous results, were as grasping as

they were cowardly. They ruined English interests in Bengal; they impeded Clive in his gigantic efforts to retrieve them; they envied, hated, and feared him, and, while jealous of his renown, and indifferent to the glory of their country's arms, they were ready to take to themselves the credit of wisdom and statesmanship for what was effected, and considered no amount of money which they could appropriate sufficient for their services.

While the revolution bore Meer Jaffier to a throne, sent the treasures of Moorshedabad to Fort William, and spread terror of the name of Clive and of the English all over India, it brought new and fatal calamities upon him whose shameless cupidity and iron oppression provoked it. The fugitive Suraj was betrayed by a Hindoo, whose family he had oppressed, and brought back to Moorshedabad a few days after his flight, while yet his treasures loaded the galleys on the river, and the English were celebrating their success with festivity, music, and Bengal lights. The English drums beat merrily, and the coruscations of the fireworks rendered the sky lurid, as the captive prince, shorn of his glory, no man so mean as to do him homage, was borne to the footstool of him who had once feared his frown. Meer Jaffier resolved, or pretended to resolve, upon consigning the unfortunate prince to a humane and even luxurious captivity. But the new nabob had a son, a youth of seventeen, as ferocious as Suraj himself, and as despicable a coward. This aspirant for the honours of an Indian Mohammedan throne murdered the captive while under the guardianship of his father's honour. Such were the Mohammedan princes and rulers of India—*semper eadem*—changeless in their sanguinary treachery and despotism to the last. Meer Jaffier became uneasy lest this

tragedy should incense his masters, which the English virtually were, and his protestations and apologies were profuse. Clive was indignant at this brutality; but the council at Calcutta, while expressing their horror of the deed, had no pity for its victim, and would not trouble themselves to demand any investigation into the matter. Thus perished Suraj-ad-Dowlah, under circumstances of striking retribution. He had, by his oppressions and wrongs, driven his chief general into rebellion, and suffered in turn the most cruel indignities and punishment from him. He had caused, or at least occasioned, the murder of Englishmen, under circumstances the most inhuman and revolting, in a room at Calcutta; through the instrumentality of the English, he became himself a captive, and suffered a fate similar to that he had permitted to go unpunished, if he did not directly inflict.

The new nabob lived and moved under the control of the English: the council at Calcutta reigned—he administered. The vast and rich regions of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa lay at the feet of the company. Regions more extensive, and abounding in more natural wealth than all western Europe, were expanded before the power and enterprise of the adventurous strangers. They began their career of arms in a naval battle at Surat, in which, against odds the most deterring, they bore away victory, astonishing and filling the native mind with admiration: they had now, at Plassey, achieved a victory on land as signally, closing that portion of their career which they had fulfilled, in the subjugation of the largest and richest provinces of India to their dictation. Yet they were destined to enter upon new phases in their Indian political existence, and to tread new paths of greatness and of glory.

## CHAPTER LXXIV.

OPPOSITION TO THE SOUBAHDARSHIP OF MEER JAFFIER—INTRIGUES OF THE NABOB OF OUDE, AND OTHER NATIVE PRINCES, INSTIGATED BY THE FRENCH—INVASION OF BENGAL BY THE DUTCH, AND THEIR DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION BY COLONEL FORD—INVASION OF BENGAL BY SHAH-ZADA—HIS REPULSE AND FLIGHT—DEFEAT OF THE NAIB OF POORANIA BY CAPTAIN KNOX—DEATH OF THE HEIR OF THE SOUBAHDAR BY LIGHTNING, AND CONSEQUENT TERMINATION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

THE glorious issue of Clive's short campaign, and the rejoicings at Moorshedabad and Calcutta, were the immediate preludes of further troubles. M. Law had hastened to the succour of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, when that prince requested his presence for the defence of Bengal. Having, however, received infor-

mation of the battle of Plassey, he halted until further intelligence should reach him from Suraj.\* He soon learned from other sources

\* "Had he immediately proceeded twenty miles further, he would, the next day, have met and saved Suraj Dowlah, and an order of events very different from those which we have to relate would have ensued."—*Orme*, vol. ii. p. 185.

that all was lost, and that assistance from him was impossible. A part of Clive's army, under the gallant and skilful Coote, hung upon the rear of the enemy, compelling them to retire from Bengal. The French abandoned all thought of directly interfering with English policy in that province, but still hoped to thwart it through the government of Oude and the court of the Mogul.

While various intrigues were conducted in that quarter, Meer Jaffier found his newly-attained power rest heavily upon him. According to some writers he was unwilling, when the moment for assuming regal state arrived, to take upon him the dignity, and Clive was obliged to use gentle force, and something more, to cause his protégé to go through the ceremony of installation. Other writers aver that this was only a well-acted scene between the two principal performers, to which the other actors were accessories without penetrating the motives of the chiefs.

Meer Jaffier was scarcely left to himself a week after the withdrawal of Clive from Moorshedabad, before he discovered that many of the zemindars were unwilling to recognise his title, that portions of his army were mutinous, that his chief civil functionaries were disgusted by the large sums withdrawn from the treasury by the English, and that most of the chief persons in his province were reluctant to acknowledge a *soubahdar* who derived his appointment, not from the grand Mogul, but a foreign conqueror.

Meer Jaffier made the exhaustion of his treasury by the English a ground for levying further taxes, and at the same time for neither paying his troops nor civil functionaries. Most English writers maintain that his treasury was really exhausted, and that those who placed him on the "musnid" deprived him of the means of government. Continental writers, especially French, persist in alleging that he outwitted the British, the latter never suspecting there was an inner treasury within the zenana, where eight crores of rupees, equivalent to eight millions sterling, were stowed away. They bring plausible proofs for this assertion from documents possessed by M. Law, the statements of natives of influence at the court of Moorshedabad, and the fact that the widow of Meer Jaffier was ultimately possessed of enormous wealth, to be accounted for on no other supposition than that of a reserved treasury, of which the English had neither knowledge nor suspicion. Clive knew so little of the habits of oriental courts, that, notwithstanding his strong sense, he might in such a matter be deceived.

The disaffection of Meer Jaffier's army rapidly increased; the atrocities and tyranny

of Suraj-ad-Dowlah appeared to be forgotten in the universal pity excited by his assassination, and abhorrence of the perpetrator. Besides, Surajah, in his better moments, was capable of kindness, and he made politic use of that parade and pomp so necessary in an Eastern prince. His person was regal and imposing, although his intellect was weak. He was but twenty-five years of age when assassinated, and, according to native historians, his features were regular, and his countenance expressed much sweetness. If this last assertion be a fact, it controverts the theories of physiognomists, who describe the countenances of men as expressing the habitual passions and emotions: there is evidence enough to prove, that those of Suraj were cruelty, avarice, and sensuality. The soldiery and people of Moorshedabad, however, made comparisons between the deposed prince and the deposer, to the disadvantage of the latter in many, if not in all respects; and the increase of insubordination and disaffection soon awakened Meer Jaffier to a sense of the insecurity of his newly acquired throne. Hence arose a new source of uneasiness to the governor of Calcutta.

No plots of the French, of the Nabob of Oude, of the Mogul emperor, or of any other aspirant to power, did so much to weaken the government of Meer Jaffier as the conduct of himself and his son, Meeran. The former sunk into contemptible sloth, disgracing the "musnid" by incessant intoxication. His son, Meeran, was full of youth and energy, and his vigour was employed in every description of wickedness, which his father, and the Begum (his mother), who were devotedly attached to him, not only tolerated but encouraged. Assassinations as ruthless as that of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, were frequently perpetrated by him. His father had been indebted for everything to Ali Verdi Khan, yet the princesses, the granddaughters of that monarch, were murdered by him, on the pretence that it was necessary to get rid of the disloyal, if he would enjoy repose. The infant brother and infant nephew of Suraj-ad-Dowlah were also murdered by him in a manner as coarse as it was cruel. The Mohammedan people were not averse to the bloody deeds of Meeran, so long as they were directed to supposed or ostensible enemies. Sympathising in their own minds with bloodshed, they were gratified by the execution of rich Hindoos, especially such as held any confidential communication with the English, and many such suffered in their persons or properties, and not a few were slain. Meeran was the chief support of Meer Jaffier. The whole family of Suraj Dowlah was seized. His widow, mother,

daughter, aunt, and an adopted boy, were seized at midnight, with seventy persons of inferior note: all of the latter were drowned, and some of the former; but it has never been clearly ascertained which were destroyed and which sent back to prison.

The feeling between Meer Jaffier and the British was very bad, and that between his son and them much more hostile. The British soon regarded the successor of Suraj-ad-Dowlah as no better than that unfortunate prince. He governed his people badly, showed that he regarded the English alliance as merely a convenience, and that as soon as he could throw it off he would. Meeran openly declared his hatred of it, and was in constant fear of being seized by Clive as an open enemy. The young prince was ready to join any enterprise, however hazardous, not involving the exposure of his own person to danger, that afforded the slightest hope of driving the English out of Bengal. Of these things the English were early apprised, and directed their measures accordingly. Clive soon regarded his protégé with distrust and dislike, and young Meeran with aversion. He began to vindicate the final assumption, on the part of the company, of the soubahdars of Bengal. Other enterprising English officials entertained similar views. Clive declared that the Prince Meeran could not be allowed to ascend the throne of the nabob, as was originally stipulated with Meer Jaffier, because of his hatred to the English. By degrees, Clive and all the British came to the conclusion that the sooner the nabob himself ceased to reign, the better for English security and the good government of Bengal.

The relations of the English and the nabob were complicated by the general supervision which the former exercised in government affairs. They considered themselves the real masters of Bengal, and Meer Jaffier as virtually a minister to carry out their wishes. The nabob could with less difficulty be brought to regard his position in that light, than his turbulent and tyrannical son, his soldiery, or his people. When the British remonstrated with Meeran for the murder of the mother of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, whom many writers believe to have been at the time alive, the prince did not deny the deed, as these writers allege he might have done, but inquired with astonishment, rage, and grief, "What! can I not kill an old woman that goes about in her dooly to excite the zemindars against my father?" He was indignant that the English should assume the right to interfere in such cases. They were without the power to interfere efficiently. They might denounce the atrocities and robberies perpe-

trated by the reigning nabob and his son, but could not prevent them. The remonstrances and even threats of the English only caused them to be more hated without being obeyed. The people and troops of the nabob, not conscious of the sources of British power, considered the perpetual interference of the English agents as the result of the nabob's weakness, whom they hated for allowing the infidels to dictate to the followers of the true faith. Such was the general state of the relations of the parties whose alliance promised so much and effected so little for the welfare of Eastern India, the quietness of the English settlements, and the prosperity of the English trade. Individual Englishmen of influence and authority realized vast riches, but the company found that the increase of its wealth by the alliance with Meer Jaffier, in one way or another, increased its expenses. In consequence of Clive's representations of the brilliant success achieved, and the vast advantages realized by the events of 1757, the company resolved to send out no more money for two years; but, in their correspondence, stated that the treasures deposited at Calcutta should provide for the entire expenses of the three presidencies, and also furnish the investments for the Chinese trade. The opinion of the company that the results of the Bengal conquest should be sufficient for such purposes was reasonable, although the mode in which they attempted to carry out such a decision, in the face of the state of things existing in the Carnatic, the rapid revolutions and sanguinary wars which prevailed at this time in India among princes and Europeans, was absurd.

In this condition of affairs, Clive was the overruling genius by which order was preserved, while all around was sinking into chaos. He was considered by the English as the only officer who could keep Meer Jaffier to his engagements, and awe his son Meeran. Meer Jaffier regarded him as his only reliance amidst a mutinous army, seditious people, and intriguing neighbours in Oude, Agra, and Delhi; with any or all of whom the French were ever ready to form an alliance. Meeran considered him as the tyrant of himself and his father, and the only man who stood between the family of the nabob and the exercise of unlimited power to rob and kill all who withheld what they demanded, or resisted their tyranny and caprice. Lord Macaulay describes Clive's relations to all parties thus:—"Meer Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which placed him on it. . . . The recent revolutions had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new nabob.

The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government. While this state of things existed, a ship arrived with despatches which had been written at the India-house, before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The directors had determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner; and, to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honour, took on themselves the authority of disobeying these preposterous orders, and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented, and it soon appeared that the servants of the company only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The directors, on receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their settlements in Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the south of India. Meer Jaffier regarded him with slavish awe. . . . It is but justice to say, that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition to the track lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this track the French still had the ascendancy; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was entrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little known, but in whom the keen eye of the governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.\*

Meer Jaffier's dubious relation to the English, and the still more doubtful position of his idolized son, were not his only, and scarcely even his chief difficulties. He had scarcely mounted the throne, and felt himself at once in possession of the treasures, and surrounded by the intrigues of French, Oudean, and Bengalee zemindars, as stated in the first pages of this chapter, than he was obliged to prepare against the invasion of his dominions by a competitor for his throne. The shah-zada, heir-apparent of the throne of Delhi, had obtained from his father the appointment of Soubahdar of Bengal, a richer prize than even the appointment of the Soubahdar of the Deccan. He immediately put forth a procla-

mation, announcing himself as viceroy of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and collected an army to assert claims in a more substantial manner.

The nabobs of Oude and Allahabad at once tendered their support as an act of loyalty to the Mogul, and Meer Jaffier utterly despaired of encountering these nabobs, and the irregular army collected from every quarter by his competitor. His resource was Clive. He could trust no one else. He was profuse in his promise of future good behaviour and large grants of money, although at the time his own troops were defrauded of their pay, while he and his dissipated son lived in scandalous and foolish luxury and excesses. While claiming the protection of the English, and promising everything to them, he was, after the fashion of Indian princes, opening negotiations with his enemies unknown to his allies, and resorting to the desperate, and in his case foolish expedient, of bribing them off. Clive soon discovered this, and remonstrated; but the cowardly Jaffier could not see the force of these protests. All his predecessors had purchased immunity from invasion in a similar manner. Clive became more energetic in his tone, and wrote:—"If you do this, you will have the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money until you have none left in your treasury. I beg your excellency to rely on the fidelity of the English and of the troops that are attached to you." Clive, concluding that his advice would not be followed by his protégé, unless the chief officers of the latter showed some determination, wrote to the governor of Patna in a still more energetic tone:—"Come to no terms; defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are staunch and firm friends, and that is they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

The enemy advanced by forced marches to the investiture of Patna, in order to anticipate Clive, who, he had heard, was also advancing with the utmost rapidity, to save that important city. Clive's little army consisted of less than three thousand fighting men, of which less than five hundred were Europeans. The enemy numbered forty thousand men, besides large forces in support from Oude and Allahabad. There was also a considerable number of French officers among them, who were eager for battle with the English. These assured the native prince that, if the vast army would press the siege of Patna, and attack the force of Clive, under their directions, the British and their allies should be

\* *Critical and Historical Essays*. By Thomas Babington Macaulay, vol. ii. p. 108-9.

scattered as the dust by the storm, and the city, with its riches, fall into the hands of the besiegers. In vain the gallant Frenchmen urged battle upon the prince and his generals; they fled before Clive's force came in sight. Probably no Indian army ever so much disgraced itself. The flight of the army was not, however, as Lord Macaulay represents, wholly caused by terror of Clive and his British. The Nabob of Oude had proved treacherous: he had seized the capital of his ally, the Nabob of Allahabad, who withdrew his forces from before Patna, to save his own territories. M. Law and a detachment of French met this nabob with his troops, and urged his return to the siege, offering his aid, and afterwards effecting the restoration of the territory seized by the nabob of Oude. The Allahabad nabob was too much in earnest to save his treasures and territory to think any more of Patna and the alliance. M. Law, instead of advancing and rallying the army of the invader, as Clive would have done in like circumstances, retired in despair, and the heterogeneous masses of the *shah-zada* dissolved as snow flakes in the river. The vicinity of Patna was cleared of intruders, and Clive returned to Moorshedabad in triumph as complete as when he entered it after the battle of Plassey. The Mogul, or, at all events, the pretender to the soubahdarship of Bengal acting in his name, negotiated for the cession of his claims. A small grant of money was given to him, on condition that he signed a treaty conferring the *nominal rank* of soubahdar of Bengal upon another son, and, by patent, confirming Meer Jaffier in the actual vicerealty.

The viceroy seemed now secure against all enemies, having the sanction of the Mogul himself for his government, and so great was his gratitude that he conferred the jaghire of Calcutta and the surrounding territory upon Clive. Thus the East India Company became his tenants, and the rent they paid to the soubahdar was in future to be paid to him. This amounted to £30,000 a year. He was at the same time made "a lord" of the Mogul empire, by the Mogul. The East India Company recognised the privileges conferred upon Clive, and paid their rents to him. From their subsequent conduct, it was evident they were influenced in this by a view of their own interests. This princely fortune rendered it unnecessary that they should confer upon him large pecuniary rewards for the great services he had rendered, and if at any time they thought it expedient to become rent free, it would be probably easier to make themselves so if Clive or his successor was landlord, than if the Mogul or his viceroy

held the jaghireship. There was nothing in the conduct of the company at the time that was unfair to Clive, but afterwards efforts were made to deprive him of his rights by some of the very men who were forward in recognising them when they were acquired. Lord Macaulay, who questioned the propriety politically and ethically of Clive's reception of the previous donations of Meer Jaffier, considered his acceptance of this gift proper. His lordship assigns no reason for this discrepancy of opinion, except that this donation, from its nature, could not be secret; yet he admits that Clive made no secret, and never intended to make any, of the previous acquisitions from Meer Jaffier. If the reception of money in the one case were right, it requires a casuistry more subtle, and a logic more profound than even his lordship's, to make it appear wrong in the other. The East India Company's recognition was equally extended to both. Clive did not represent the British government, but a trading company which favoured any acquisitions made by its servants which did not infringe its rights or emoluments. This must be kept in view in all arguments that are maintained upon the subject.

Scarcely had Meer Jaffier conferred honours and endowments upon Clive, than he began a series of intrigues, of a daring nature, against the English themselves. He knew that he could obtain no absolute power in Bengal while the English were there, and he formed the design of allying himself to the Dutch for the purpose of driving them out. There was no other European state to which he could apply. The Dutch were supreme in the Archipelago, and their fame was still great in India. The viceroy did not know that the power of Holland had much decayed in Europe, the wars with the English having issued in reducing the United Provinces from the position of first naval power. By the instrumentality of the Dutch, Meer Jaffier determined to play this new game, and incur the peril of losing all or driving the English away. It does not seem to have occurred to him that the Dutch would in turn have become his masters, and that the only true reliance for a prince or a people, where independence is to be sought and won, should be on

'Native swords and native ranks.'

It is probable that this treacherous and feeble prince would not have ventured upon so daring a scheme, had he not believed that the recognition of his actual vicerealty by the Mogul, secured him against all danger of insurrection in his own territories, or invasion by his Mohammedan neighbours. Clive soon discovered that some intrigue was proceeding,

but does not appear to have had the least suspicion that a European power was concerned, or even contemplated by Meer Jaffier. He lost all confidence in his protégé, and began to regard it as politic to prepare for the assumption of English power in Bengal, without the intervention of a nabob. In January, 1769, he addressed a letter to Mr. Pitt, requesting him to send a sufficient force "to open a way for securing the soubahdarship to ourselves." His plan was to enter into a treaty with the Mogul, and receive from him the supreme authority in Bengal, subject to the payment of fifty lacs of rupees yearly, which could easily be spared out of the Bengal revenues. Clive, who hated Mohammedanism, and distrusted all Mohammedans of whatever rank, assured Mr. Pitt that Meer Jaffier would break with the English as soon as he found it his interest, no matter under what obligations they laid him; and as to his son and probable successor Meeran, he represented him as "so apparently the enemy of the English, that it will be almost unsafe trusting him with the succession."

The intrigues of Meer Jaffier and his infamous son were successful in gaining over the Dutch. They determined on an expedition to Bengal; a large fleet was fitted out at Batavia, and a considerable body of troops put on board. Their destination was Chinsurah, where the Dutch had a factory, with the chiefs of which Meer Jaffier had conducted his intrigues. Suddenly the presidency at Calcutta was alarmed by the arrival of seven of the largest Dutch ships in the Hoogly, having on board fifteen hundred men; seven hundred of whom were Europeans, and the rest Malays. Holland and England were at peace, and Clive knew that no danger menaced the Dutch settlements, requiring such military reinforcements, and the presence of so powerful a fleet. He therefore determined on intercepting them, so as to prevent the arrival of the troops at Chinsurah. He perhaps never found himself in a more anxious situation. At that time, it would have been a serious matter to the English government to be at war with Holland, added to its other European difficulties; the ministry might disavow his acts, notwithstanding the obvious justice and necessity of the course taken by him in such an emergency. Should the English ministry disavow him, and offer compensation to Holland for any injury sustained by the Dutch armament or settlement, it was probable that Clive's great wealth would be seized to make good the amount. The English government had always been rapacious and unjust in its conduct to the company, and seldom allowed justice in the righteous claims of an individual

to stand in the way of its policy. Probably no government in Europe had proved itself so indifferent to individual losses and suffering as the English, when a political purpose was to be served or the exchequer spared, unless indeed the claimant had aristocratic pretensions or influence. Clive doubted much whether his influence or that of the company, or his past services, or his popularity in England, or all these sources of power together, would prove sufficient to deter the English ministry from sacrificing him, if to do so answered a party end, or relieved the court from any embarrassment. A large portion of his money having been sent to Europe through the Dutch East India Company, that company would, in all probability confiscate his deposits, and thus another consideration was added to those of a political as well as personal nature to prevent him from beginning the war, by intercepting the Dutch armaments. On the other hand, so large was the force, so faithless the soubahdar, and so few the English troops then disposable for service in Bengal, that if the Dutch once gained a footing, they could hold their position until new and powerful reinforcements to their navy and army should arrive from Batavia, and these, acting with the native army of the soubahdar, might effect the expulsion of the English from Bengal. The soubahdar declared that he knew nothing of the schemes of the Dutch, of which he had received timely and accurate information, and whose agents were actually recruiting in Bahar, Patna, and even Moorshedabad. The Dutch Company had always acted with an ostensible independence of its government, but as constantly with its connivance, and Dutch policy in India and the Eastern seas was piratical. To force a commerce by destroying the ships and settlements of all competitors was the simple policy of the Batavians. It would have been impolitic in the extreme to allow this great force to menace the interests of the English in Bengal. Clive ordered as strong a detachment as he could spare, under Colonel Forde, an officer in whom he placed implicit confidence, to act as an army of observation. Forde endeavoured to prevent the advance of the Dutch troops by remonstrance and expostulation, which were of no avail. Hesitating to proceed to extremities, he sent to Calcutta for positive orders, representing the persistence of the Dutch as only to be overcome by force. Clive was playing cards when the message arrived. He tore off a piece of Forde's letter, and wrote upon it in pencil—"Dear Forde,—Fight 'em immediately, and I will send an order of council to-morrow." Forde did "fight 'em imme-



diately," although with forces much inferior as to number, and so justified Clive's confidence that the Dutch were completely defeated, of the seven hundred Europeans, not more than fourteen reached Chinsurah. An attack upon the fleet was also successful, the ships were all made prizes.

The results of these signal defeats were satisfactory, the Dutch at Chinsurah submitted to such terms as Clive thought proper to impose, which were that no fortifications should be erected, and no armed persons to be retained in connection with their factory, except for police purposes; and, upon violation of either of these terms, expulsion from Bengal was mutually recognised as a just penalty. Clive restored the ships at the end of December, 1759.

The fate of Meer Jaffier would have been sealed by these events had policy allowed. He made vehement protestations of fidelity, and declared his entire ignorance of the proceedings of the Dutch; but while the English did not deem it then discreet to act against the soubahdar for what he said or did, they had already resolved in their own minds to allow matters to take their course as regarded him, and await patiently the moment most opportune for setting aside his authority. It is probable from the subsequent conduct of Meer Jaffier, that he penetrated the purposes of the English, and like a true Mussulman, resigned himself to the fate the future might reveal, continued to enjoy his debauches, and to accumulate precious stones, rich apparel and coin, against the probable crisis which awaited him.

Upon the fortunes of Clive these events produced such effects as might be expected. His name and presence awed his own countrymen, and were a terror to every native prince in India. The sepoy idolized him, the native populations of India listened with eagerness to the wandering story-tellers who recounted his feats of arms, embellished by additions of deeds more or less than human, as suited the oriental fancy. The belief was concurrent among the native populations, that the devil's inspiration had much to do with the military genius of the great commander. In England his glory was the common subject of conversation, and the universal boast of his countrymen, amongst whom, for so long a time, so few eminent generals had been raised up. Before the Dutch were humbled, Pitt in one of his thrilling orations had passed upon him the highest eulogies, calling him "the heaven-born general, a man, who, bred to the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the King of Prussia." Upon this Lord Macaulay remarks:—

"There were then no reporters in the gallery; but these words, emphatically spoken by the first statesman of the age, had passed from mouth to mouth, had been transmitted to Clive in Bengal, and had greatly delighted and flattered him. Indeed, since the death of Wolfe, Clive was the only general of whom his countrymen had much reason to be proud." The minds of the people of England were thus prepared to hear of great exploits from Clive, and to appreciate them, and as the Dutch were unpopular, the humiliation which he inflicted upon them filled his countrymen with wild delight. It was Forde who really accomplished the feats of battle, but he acted under the inspiration of Clive, who carried away the palm. Clive, however, did justice to the gallant Forde; he was always liberal in praise to the brave, although strict even to tyranny upon all under his command who dared to dispute his will. Forde's previous service in command of a detachment sent to the Northern Circars by Clive, at the instigation of one of the leading polygars in that district, and in opposition to his own council, had been brilliant. Forde met the rajah's troops, and in a pitched battle inflicted upon them as signal defeat as he afterwards gave the Dutch near Chinsurah. This was the means of troubling the French much, and of influencing, favourably to the British, the war in the Carnatic, as already noticed in a more appropriate place. It does not appear, notwithstanding the high opinion of him entertained by Clive, that either the company or his country appreciated the military genius and valour of Forde.

Clive having remitted large sums of money to England, was anxious to see to their security. The Dutch Company held £180,000, the English Company £40,000, and probably £80,000 had been remitted through private hands. He, therefore, in February, 1760, returned to England. His departure was at an unfortunate juncture for Bengal. Before the Dutch invasion, a new invasion by the Mogul prince was threatened, and scarcely had the Dutch episode terminated by the restoration of the captured ships and treasures in December, 1759, than intrigues were discovered among the native princes, and at the court of Moorsshedabad, likely to embroil Bengal with surrounding nabobs, and to expose it to insurrectionary movements. Clive, Forde, and other influential officers who were in good health persisted in returning home, in the face of a state of affairs which were perilous, and have not escaped censure for leaving Bengal to its fate. Colonel Calliaud, however, was re-called from the Carnatic, and as he was a man of superior military

parts, it was believed by Clive and the council, that he would be able to maintain the interests and honour of the company in military affairs.

Towards the end of November, 1759, Colonel Calliaud arrived in Bengal with reinforcements, and he was at once engaged in active operations to avert the threatened dangers. Clive himself determined to support him, and, if possible, settle matters at Moorshedabad before he departed from India.

The danger immediately impending was a new invasion by the shah-zada. Clive was determined that his highness should, if possible, be severely chastised for his breach of the treaty made upon his former defeat, and he therefore placed at Calliaud's disposal three hundred European infantry, six pieces of cannon with fifty European artillerymen, and one thousand sepoy, and sent him forward at once to Moorshedabad; other forces were to join him, and Clive himself was to follow as soon as his attention to other affairs allowed. Mr. Mill blames the determination of the British to uphold Meer Jaffier against the shah-zada as an encouragement of rebellion, and a participation in it, and he denounces both the morals and policy of Clive's course. Professor Wilson gives the following brief but complete reply to this:—"It was not a question of policy, but one of good faith. By the treaty with Meer Jaffier, as well as by the nature of their connection with him, the English were pledged to assist him against all enemies whatever, and few of the governors of the provinces would have scrupled to consider the emperor as an enemy if he had sought to dispossess them of their soubahs. Even, however, if the theory of obedience to a monarch, who at the very seat of empire was no longer his own master, could be urged with any show of reason, it would not be applicable in the present instance, for the shah-zada was not appointed by the emperor to be his deputy in Bengal, and as Clive pleaded to the prince himself, no communication of his movements or purposes had been made from Delhi. On the contrary, the prince was there treated as a rebel to his father. He could not plead, therefore, the emperor's authority for his incursion, and no other pretext could have afforded him the semblance even of right."

After the shah-zada set out upon his second invasion, various events occurred which complicated the state of affairs. Mr. Mill describes them with so much beauty and accuracy, that his description will admirably convey the position and relation of parties, as events rapidly presented new phases in the general political condition:—"The powerful king of the Abdallees was again on his march

for the invasion of Hindostan. Excited by the approach of formidable danger, the vizir, in a fit of exasperation or despair, ordered the murder of the emperor, the wretched Alumgeer; and the news of this tragical event reached the shah-zada, just as he had passed the Caramnassa into the province of Bahar. He was advised to assume immediately the state and title of emperor; to confer the office of vizir upon Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, and to confirm Nujeeb-ad-Dowlah in the office of Ameer-ul-Omrah. The majesty of the imperial throne, and his undoubted title, had an influence still upon the minds of men. It was now clear and immediate rebellion to resist him; and whatever guilt could be involved in making war upon their rightful sovereign, must be incurred by those who carried arms against him. The English had already familiarized themselves with the idea of rebellion in India; and the consideration of legitimate sovereignty, though the sovereign would have purchased their protection by unlimited grants, appears not to have excited a scruple in a single breast. The new dignity, however, of vizir, called on the Nabob of Oude for some exertions in favour of his sovereign; and the fascination of the imperial title was still of force to collect around him a considerable army. The march of the English was retarded by the necessity of settling terms with the Nabob of Poorania, who had encamped on the left bank of the river between Moorshedabad and Patna, and professed a desire of remaining obedient to Jaffier, provided the English would engage for his security. This negotiation wasted seven days; and in the meantime the emperor advanced towards Patna. Ramnarain, whom the sagacity of Ali Verdi had selected to be deputy-governor of Bahar, on account of his skill in matters of finance, was destitute of military talents: and considering his situation, under the known hatred of Jaffier, as exceedingly precarious, he was unwilling to lay out any of the wealth he had acquired, in providing for the defence of the country. He was still enabled to draw forth a respectable army, reinforced by seventy Europeans and a battalion of English sepoy, commanded by Lieutenant Cochrane; and he encamped under the walls with a view to cover the city."

Colonel Calliaud had united his forces with those of Meeran, who was at the head of fifteen thousand men and twenty-five pieces of cannon. The British colonel enjoined upon Cochrane defensive measures, and to avoid giving battle until he and Meeran should come up. Cochrane was either unwilling or unable to obey those commands,

and a battle was fought, in which a signal defeat was sustained by Cochrane and his native coadjutor, Ramnarain, the governor of the province, who was a good financier and a bad soldier. The chief officers of Ramnarain behaved faithfully, and endeavoured to bring over the troops to the service of the Mogul. The English never fought better, and, few as they were, cut their way through the enemy, or rather the enemy, awed by their undaunted bearing, gave way before them, not daring to interpose. Finally, the detachment arrived safely at Patna.

The following curious account of this transaction was given by a Mogul nobleman, and is interesting, as disclosing the light in which the English appeared to men of his class:—"What remained of their people [the English] was rallied by Doctor William Fullerton, a friend of mine, and possibly by some English officers, whose names I know not, who ranged them in order again; and as one of their guns was to be left on the field of battle, they found means to render it useless and of no avail, by thrusting a large needle of iron into its eye. The other being in good condition, they took it with them, together with its ammunition; and that handful of men had the courage to retire in the face of a victorious enemy, without once shrinking from their ranks. During their journey, the cart of ammunition chanced to receive some damage; the doctor stopped unconcernedly, and, after having put it in order, he bravely pursued his route again; and it must be acknowledged, that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery, are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array, and fighting in order. If to so many military qualifications they knew how to join the arts of government; if they showed a concern for the circumstances of the husbandman and the gentleman, and exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving and easing the people of God, as they do in whatever concerns their military affairs, no nation in the world would be preferable to them, or prove worthier of command. But such is the little regard which they show to the people of these kingdoms, and such their apathy and indifference for their welfare, that the people under their dominion groan everywhere, and are reduced to poverty and distress. Oh God! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions they suffer."

The people of God here referred to were the Mohammedans: the privileges they desired, the power to oppress the Hindoos.

Mill says, "Had the troops of the emperor pushed on with vigour, immediately after this victory, when Ramnarain was severely wounded, his army panic-struck and dispersed, and the city without defenders, they might have taken Patna with the greatest ease. But they employed themselves in ravaging the open country, and in receiving messengers and overtures from Ramnarain, till the 19th of February, when they learned that Meeran and the English were distant from them but twenty-eight miles. The resolution was taken to march and engage them; the next day the two armies approached. Colonel Calliaud urged immediate attack; but Meeran and his astrologers found that the stars would not be favourable before the 22nd. Early on the morning of that day, Calliaud was in motion; but before he could reach the enemy, the day was so far spent 'by the insufferable delays,' as he himself complains, of 'Meeran's march,' that, wishing to have time before him, he was unwilling to engage till the following morning. The enemy, however, advanced, and Calliaud drew up his men between two villages which covered both his flanks, advising Meeran to form a second line, the whole of which, except the two wings, would have been covered by the English and the villages. But, though this was agreed upon, 'he crowded his army upon the right, and, in spite of the most pressing and repeated solicitations, presented to battle a body of fifteen thousand men, with a front of scarcely two hundred yards, in a tumultuous unformed heap.' With a feigned appearance of directing the main attack upon the English, the enemy advanced, with the best part of their army, upon Meeran, who, in about ten minutes, began to give way. Colonel Calliaud, however, marched with a battalion of sepoys to his aid, and immediately decided the fate of the day."

Calliaud in vain endeavoured to induce Meeran to pursue the enemy, or place a body of cavalry at his disposal, with which, in conjunction with his sepoy infantry, he would himself give chase. Meeran preferred enjoying himself at Patna, in his usual dissipations. This he continued to do until the 29th of January, 1760. Meanwhile, the emperor, who had retreated to Bahar, gathered courage, and resolved, if possible, to gain some days' march between the allies and Moorshedabad, and seize the viceroy and the capital before the self-indulgences at Patna terminated. When Meeran consented to move, the emperor was on his march to execute the stratagem he had projected. Calliaud, by forced marches and by sending swift boats with troops up the river, was enabled so to menace the emperor's flank as to cause him to change his route,

still vigilantly followed by Calliaud. The viceroy meantime became apprised of the danger, mustered what forces he could, and received two hundred men from Calcutta. This army formed a junction with that under Meeran and Calliaud, and, in the face of a meditated attack, the emperor burned his camp, and retreated. Calliaud was of opinion that, by better concerted movements and more celerity, the imperial army might have entered Moorshedabad. Once more Calliaud proposed the pursuit of the retreating foe; but neither the viceroy nor the hope of his house had the courage to adopt his advice. He again urged upon them the necessity of placing some cavalry at his own disposal for the purpose. It was refused. At this juncture, M. Law, at the head of a French force, passed near Patna, which had been left without means of defence; but Law was ignorant of the fact, and proceeded to Bahar, to await the arrival of the emperor. Had the emperor's own army turned aside to Patna with celerity, he would have entered it unopposed. That city had a third piece of good fortune, in escaping the Nabob of Poorania, who, at the moment, declared for the emperor. Patna was within an easy march of his forces; but he neglected the opportunity. Patna, through the bad generalship of all parties, was saved from a *coup* before which it must have fallen. The emperor, however, when the opportune moment had passed away, advanced against it. The English factors and the native governor had thrown up defences and organized a force. Calliaud, with his usual sagacity and promptitude, had dispatched two hundred European soldiers—the *élite* of his army—and a battalion of sepoys. Before this force could arrive, the emperor, joined by M. Law and the French, pressed the siege, and, having demolished part of the ramparts, assaulted the place. Dr. Fullerton, the English surgeon, with that courage which the medical men attached both to the company's and the royal army have so frequently shown, at the head of such force as he could collect, repulsed the assailants. In two days, Law, with his Frenchmen, renewed the assault, and succeeded in scaling the broken ramparts. Again Dr. Fullerton, and one Rajah Shitabroy, succeeded in repelling the assailants. It was, however, expected that the whole French force, supported by the emperor's best native troops, would the next night renew the assault, and the citizens had no reliance upon themselves, and no hope of again repelling the stormers. While all was despair and confusion in the city, Captain Knox, with the light companies of his force, was seen from the walls rapidly approaching. He had, by forced

marches, reached Patna in thirteen days, himself and his men having endured terrible hardships from fatigue and heat. That evening he reconnoitred the enemy, who were deterred from offering an assault to the city. Next day, at the usual hour of temporary repose in India, Knox surprised the enemy while the troops were asleep, entered their works, and made havoc of those who occupied them. The main army retired.

The Nabob of Poorania, who still lingered in the neighbourhood, at last began his march to join the emperor. Knox proposed to the governor of Patna to cross the river, and so harass the nabob as to detain him until Calliaud and Meeran should arrive. The governor assented; but when the hour for action came, none of the native troops or citizens would venture upon an expedition which appeared to them so full of peril. Rajah Shitabroy had three hundred men in his pay, who had caught the fire of their master's spirit: these joined Knox, and the little army crossed the river. It was the captain's plan to effect a night surprise; but his guide deceived him, and kept him and his troops uselessly wandering about until morning, when, wearied, he and his men lay down upon their arms. At that moment, the advanced guard of the enemy approached. Knox took up his position with skill, and a battle ensued, which lasted for six hours. The enemy's troops numbered twelve thousand men, and again and again surrounded the little bands of Knox and the rajah, but were repulsed with heavy slaughter. At last disheartened, the enemy began to show symptoms of disorder. The English commander charged with his whole force. The rajah's troops were cavalry, and were most efficient in the charge. The enemy was pursued until dark.

During the terrible contest, the citizens crowded the ramparts, their minds alternating between hope and fear; but, on the whole, their coward hearts yielded to the latter. They saw the ebb and flow of battle, and trembled with alarm, and were, no doubt, ready to welcome any victor who might approach from the contested field, if only they could secure their goods.

The glorious conduct of Knox and his brave native colleague, Rajah Shitabroy, was thus oddly noticed by a native author already quoted:—"When the day was far spent, a note came to Mr. Amyatt from Captain Knox, which mentioned that the enemy was defeated and flying. The intelligence was sent to all the principal men of the city, and caused a deal of joy. I went to the factory, to compliment the gentlemen, when, in the dusk of the evening, Captain Knox himself crossed

over, and came with Shitabroy and his party. They were both covered with dust and sweat. The captain then gave some detail of the battle, and paid the greatest encomiums on Shitabroy's zeal, activity, and valour. He exclaimed several times, 'This is a real nabob; I never saw such a nabob in my life.' A few moments after, Ramnarain was introduced. He had in his company both Mustapha Koollee Khan, and the cutwal of the city, with some other men of consequence, who, on hearing of the arrival of these two men, had flocked to the factory; and, on seeing them alone, could not help believing that they had escaped from the slaughter; so far were they from conceiving that a few hundreds of men could defeat a whole army. Nor could they be made to believe (impressed as they were with Hindoo notions) that a commander could quit his army so unconcernedly, unless he had indeed run away from it: nor would listen to what Mr. Amyatt repeatedly said, to convince Ramnarain and others of their mistake.\*

The immediate consequence of the victory was that the nabob gave up his idea of marching to join the emperor, but turned his course northward; Calliaud and Meeran arriving, they crossed the Ganges in pursuit, and soon overtook him, because of the encumbrances of baggage and heavy guns of position by which his army was attended. The nabob drew up in battle array, but with no disposition to fight. He merely sought time to place his treasures and women on camels and swift elephants, and then, calling in his skirmishers, left his baggage and guns in the hands of the English, and precipitately retreated.† The conduct of Meeran was dastardly in the extreme on this occasion. Calliaud‡ thus describes it:—"The young nabob and his troops behaved in this skirmish in their usual manner, halting above a mile in the rear, nor ever once made a motion to sustain the English. Had he but acted on this occasion with the least appearance of spirit, and made even a semblance of fighting, the affair must have proved decisive; nor could Cuddum Honssein Khan or his treasure have escaped." Calliaud pursued the nabob, and the reluctant Meeran joined in the pursuit.

Many months of 1760 had now been consumed in repelling the invasion of the shah-zada, and many defeats were inflicted upon him and his coadjutors; yet adherents among the native chiefs, of various ranks, still joined his standard; and his attainment to the throne of empire rendered it very likely that this

would continue to be the case, unless blow after blow were struck by the British and their ally with rapidity and severity. It was the month of July: the rains were falling; and the nabob would soon be beyond reach of his pursuers, unless rapid advance was made, in spite of the tempests which now impeded the march of bodies of men in northern Bengal. Meeran reluctantly struggled forward, under the pressure of remonstrance and entreaty from the vigorous and active Calliaud. On the night of the 2nd of July, after four days of severe pursuit, an event occurred which materially altered the prospects of the war. The night was one of fierce and uninterrupted storm: thunder shook the allied camps, and the forked lightnings played amid the tents like incessant showers of fiery darts. Many of the natives believed that the gods bent their bows and discharged their arrows among the helpless host, and the invisible world fought against their cause. Meeran, always solicitous for his own safety and harassed with superstitious fears, forsook his tent, which was a rich and wide-spread pavilion of light texture, for one of less dimensions and superior strength. He was attended by only two persons—a domestic slave, a favourite, who chafed his limbs to induce slumber, and a story-teller, to amuse his wakeful hours, after the manner of the East. The thunder-storm poured its successive peals along for hours over the country, and the fierce lightnings searched the camp. When, at last, the fury of the elements abated, the guards of Meeran, who crouched without, entered his tent for orders, when they found their master and his two attendants stiffened in death, their bodies scathed with lightning and their costume singed or burned. Six holes were numbered on the back part of the commander's head, and his body was streaked as if with the marks of a whip. A scimitar, which lay on the pillow above his head, was also perforated, and the point melted. The tent-pole was charred. A single stroke of the electric fluid had blasted the life of the prince and his attendants. The French afterwards raised a rumour in India that the English had assassinated Meeran. Edmund Burke alluded to this rumour in his celebrated speech opening the charge against Warren Hastings. The imputation was not only unfounded, but absurd. The English had no interest in so acting at that moment, but strong interest to the contrary, as the conduct of Calliaud immediately showed. That officer saw that further pursuit of the enemy was, by the event, rendered impossible. Native armies generally disperse when a chief falls; and, should the like then happen, the peril of the English troops would indeed be great. Calliaud

\* *Seer Mutakhareen*, vol. ii. p. 123.

† *Scott's History of Bengal*, pp. 392—397.

‡ *Calliaud's Narrative*, p. 34.

concealed the death, and had the prince placed upon an elephant, as if alive. He then proceeded by forced marches to Patna, alleging that Meeran was ill, to account for his not appearing on the march. Calliaud placed his troops in what the English in India called "winter quarters." Most of the Bengalees attributed the death of Meeran to the retribution of the gods upon his crimes. The

Mohammedans entertained an opinion that God had sent the stroke in consequence of the dying curse of the widow of Suraj-ad-Dowlah. The campaign with the emperor had, however, terminated, not to be renewed in favour of Meer Jaffier, and, at this juncture of affairs, Mr. Vansittart arrived in Calcutta from Madras, as the successor of Clive in the government of Bengal.

## CHAPTER LXXV.

WARREN HASTINGS PROMINENT IN THE AFFAIRS OF BENGAL—GOVERNOR VANSITTART OPPOSED BY THE COUNCIL—WAR WITH THE EMPEROR—DEFEAT OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY, AND OF THE FRENCH, WITH THE CAPTURE OF M. LAW, THE FRENCH CHIEF—ESTABLISHMENT OF MEER COSSIM IN THE SOUBAHDARSHIP BY THE ENGLISH.

IN the events which had occurred in Bengal up to the period of the arrival of Mr. Vansittart as governor, a young man took part who was destined to play a prominent part in the history of India. That young man was Warren Hastings.

Miss Martineau, reviewing this period of the history of Bengal, pithily observes:—"Where was young Hastings during these years? He had joined Clive's expedition with enthusiasm when it came up from Madras in December, 1756. But Clive soon discovered that Hastings had abilities which marked him out for political business; and he appointed him resident agent at the new nabob's court. Soon after Clive's departure in 1760, Hastings was wanted at Calcutta, as a member of council. He was in full training for his future work." To the influence of Clive much of the boldness and persistence of the policy of Hastings may probably be attributed. They admired one another, and the elder and more active man was likely to leave the traces of his strong mind and will upon the versatile, susceptible, and impressible youth who watched the intrigues of the court of Moorshedabad, and informed the governor of Bengal of the policy pursued there. Clive depended much upon the genius of Hastings for correct information and useful suggestions, for already the subtle and penetrating mind of the diplomatist gave proof of its fine edge and polished surface.

It will be appropriate in this place to take some notice of the life of Warren Hastings up to the time at which our history has arrived. Lord Macaulay\* thus writes of his origin:—"Warren Hastings sprang from an

ancient but illustrious race. It is affirmed that the pedigree can be traced back to the great Danish sea king, whose sails were long the terror of both coasts of the British Channel, and who, after many fierce and doubtful struggles, yielded at last to the valour and genius of Alfred. But the undoubted splendour of the line of Hastings needs no illustration from fable. One branch of that line wore, in the fourteenth century, the coronet of Pembroke. From another branch sprang the renowned chamberlain, the faithful adherent of the white rose, whose fate has furnished so striking a theme both to poets and historians. His family received from the Tudors the earldom of Huntingdon. . . . The lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, claimed to be the heads of this distinguished family. The main stock, indeed, prospered less than some of the younger shoots. But the Daylesford family, although not ennobled, was wealthy and highly considered, till, about two hundred years ago, it was overwhelmed by the great ruin of the civil war. The Hastings of that time was a zealous cavalier. He raised money on his lands, sent his plate to the mint at Oxford, joined the royal army, and after spending half his property in the cause of King Charles, was glad to ransom himself by making over the greater part of the remainder to Speaker Lenthall. The old seat at Daylesford still remained in the family, but it could no longer be kept up, and in the following generation was sold to a London merchant. Before the transfer took place, the last Hastings of Daylesford presented his second son to the rectory of the parish in which the ancient residence of the family stood. The living was of little value, and the situation of the poor clergyman after

\* *Critical and Historical Essays*. Contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. ii. p. 182.

the sale of the estate was deplorable. He was constantly engaged in law-suits about tithes with the new lord of the manor, and was at last utterly ruined. His eldest son, Howard, a well-conducted young man, obtained a place in the Customs. The second son, Pynaston, an idle, worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife before he was two years married, and died in the West Indies, leaving to the care of his unfortunate father a little orphan destined to strange and memorable vicissitudes of fortune."

Warren, the son of Pynaston, was born on the 6th of December, 1732. His mother died a few days later, and he was left dependant on his distressed grandfather. Such was the origin and early history of one of whom the same writer also says, "No cloud could overcast the dawn of so much genius and so much ambition. The very ploughmen observed and long remembered how very kindly little Warren took to his book." It was while at school in the rustic village at Daylesford, and while the playmate of its rustic children, that young Hastings pondered the idea of ultimately becoming the lord of his ancestors' estates. His uncle Howard took charge of him in his ninth year, and he was sent to school in London. In his eleventh year he was sent to Westminster school, where he was the fellow student of various youths who, like himself, became men of note.

On the death of his uncle, Howard Hastings, a distant relative or connection, to whose care he had been consigned by his uncle, procured him a writership in the company's service. In October, 1750, when only in his seventeenth year, he arrived in Bengal. He remained two years in the secretary's office at Calcutta, and was then sent to Cossimbazar. In that place he remained several years, making bargains for stuffs with native brokers. He was thus occupied when the sanguinary Suraj-ad-Dowlah seized upon the English there. The compassion felt by some Dutch merchants for one so young, delicate, and intelligent, induced them to plead for him, and he was released from confinement and was a sort of prisoner at large at Moorshedabad. He thence secretly corresponded with the English council when they fled from Calcutta, and he displayed such courage, capacity, and diligence in obtaining information, and such judgment and talent in the opinions he expressed, as to surprise the council, and excite their admiration of his abilities.

When Clive arrived in the Hoogly with the expedition from Madras, Hastings contrived to join it as a volunteer, and by his heroism and sagacity secured the high opinion and confidence of Clive. Immediately after the

battle of Plassey, Hastings was appointed agent for the company at the court of the new soubahdar; where he continued an invaluable servant, until the honour of member of council at Calcutta was conferred upon him. During the administration of Mr. Vansittart, Hastings was deprived of the influence to which his genius entitled him by the corrupt council. The period between Clive's first government of Bengal, the history of which has been recorded in foregoing pages, and his second government of Bengal, the history of which is yet to be related, was one of maladministration on the part of the English, and it is proper to anticipate somewhat our narrative, by quoting what Lord Macaulay, in his criticism of Gleig's *Life of Hastings*, has said of our hero's conduct during that interval:—"Of the conduct of Hastings at this time little is known; but the little that is known, and the circumstance that little is known, must be considered as honourable to him. He could not protect the natives; all that he could do, was to abstain from plundering and oppressing them, and this he appears to have done. It is certain, that at this time he continued poor, and it is equally certain that by cruelty and dishonesty he might have become rich. It is certain that he was never charged with having borne a part in the worst abuses which then prevailed, and it is almost equally certain that if he had borne a part in these abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt. The keen, severe, and even malevolent scrutiny to which his whole public life was subjected, a scrutiny unparalleled, as we believe, in the history of mankind, is in one respect advantageous to his reputation. It brought many blemishes to light, but it entitles him to be considered pure from every blemish which has not been brought to light. The truth is that the temptations to which so many English functionaries yielded in the time of Mr. Vansittart were not addressed to the ruling passion of Warren Hastings. He was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions, but he was neither sordid nor rapacious. He was far too enlightened a man to look on a great empire, merely as a buccaneer would look on a galleon. Had his heart been much worse than it was, his understanding would have preserved him from that extremity of baseness. He was an unscrupulous, perhaps an unprincipled statesman; but still he was a statesman and not a free-booter."

In 1764 Hastings returned to England. He had realized only a very moderate fortune, and that moderate fortune was soon

reduced to nothing, partly by his praiseworthy liberality, and partly by his mismanagement. "Towards his relations he appears to have acted very generously. The greater part of his savings he left in Bengal, hoping, probably, to obtain the high usury of India. But high usury and bad security generally go together, and Hastings lost both interest and principal." During the four years Hastings remained at home, as well as the four years he remained in India after Clive resigned the governorship of Bengal, many momentous events occurred in India, which prepared the way for the exalted position Hastings ultimately held, and which were of themselves of magnitude and deep importance; to them it is necessary now to turn. The departure of Clive threw the affairs of Bengal into much confusion. It has been already shown that under the heroes, Calliand and Knox, British valour was as triumphant as if Clive himself led the soldiers; but the civil concerns of the presidency were too complicated to be set or kept in order by a genius less commanding than Clive himself. There existed much discontent on the part of the English officials, even in high places, with the neglect shown by the company to men of parts, and the partialities evinced in the promotions, civil and military. To such an extent did the dissatisfaction with the company spread, that the following extraordinary document was sent home before Clive took his departure, who had himself, although the company's chief officer in Bengal, taken an active part in its production:—"Having fully spoken to every branch of your affairs at this presidency, under their established heads, we cannot, consistent with the real anxiety we feel for the future welfare of that respectable body from whom you and we are in trust, close this address without expostulating with freedom on the unprovoked and general asperity of your letter *per Prince Henry* packet. Our sentiments on this head, will, we doubt not, acquire additional weight, from the consideration of their being subscribed by a majority of your council, who are, at this very period, quitting your service, and consequently independent and disinterested. Permit us to say, that the diction of your letters is most unworthy yourselves and us, in whatever relation considered, either as masters to servants, or gentlemen to gentlemen. Mere inadvertencies, and casual neglects, arising from an unavoidable and most complicated confusion in the state of your affairs, have been treated in such language and sentiments, as nothing but the most glaring and premeditated faults could warrant. Groundless informations have, without further scrup-

tiny, borne with you the stamp of truth, though proceeding from those who had therein obviously their own purpose to serve, no matter at whose expense. These have received from you such countenance and encouragement, as must most assuredly tend to cool the warmest zeal of your servants here and everywhere else; as they will appear to have been only the source of general reflections, thrown out at random against your faithful servants of this presidency, in various parts of your letter now before us,—faithful to little purpose,—if the breath of scandal, joined to private pique or private or personal attachments, have power to blow away in one hour the merits of many years' services, and deprive them of that rank, and those rising benefits, which are justly a spur to their integrity and application. The little attention shown to these considerations in the indiscriminate favours heaped on some individuals, and undeserved censures on others, will, we apprehend, lessen that spirit of zeal so very essential to the well-being of your affairs, and, consequently, in the end, if continued, prove the destruction of them. Private views may, it is much to be feared, take the lead here, from examples at home; and no gentlemen hold your service longer, nor exert themselves further in it, than their own exigencies require. This being the real present state of your service, it becomes strictly our duty to represent it in the strongest light, or we should, with little truth, and less propriety, subscribe ourselves."

The company's reply to this was resolute, stern, and uncompromising. It was as follows, dated the 21st of January, 1761:—"We have taken under our most serious consideration the general letter from our late president and council of Fort William, dated the 29th of December, 1759, and many paragraphs therein containing gross insults upon and indignities offered to the court of directors; tending to the subversion of our authority over our servants, and a dissolution of all order and good government in the company's affairs: to put an immediate stop therefore to this evil, we do positively order and direct, that, immediately upon receipt of this letter, all those persons still remaining in the company's service, who signed the said letter, viz., Messieurs John Zephaniah Holwell, Charles Stafford Playdell, William Brightwell Sumner, and William M'Guire, be dismissed from the company's service; and you are to take care that they be not permitted, on any consideration, to continue in India, but that they are to be sent to England by the first ships which return home the same season you receive this letter."



Mr. Vansittart had from the first been opposed by a faction in the council, and "the dismissal of which this letter was the signal, not only gave a majority in the council to the party by whom he was opposed, but sent Mr. Ellis, the most intemperate and arbitrary of all his opponents, to the chieftship of the factory at Patna. He treated the nabob with the most insulting airs of authority, and broke through all respect for his government. So early as the month of January he gave his orders to the commander of the troops to seize and keep prisoner one of the nabob's collectors, who had raised some difficulties in permitting a quantity of opium, the private property of one of the company's servants to pass duty free as the property of the company. This outrage the discretion of the officer avoided, by suspending obedience to the order, and sending a letter to the nabob, to redress by his own authority whatever might appear to be wrong."\*

This Mr. Ellis continued, with indomitable energy and violence, to contravene the orders of Mr. Vansittart; and his disobedience and insults to the governor received such a measure of support from the opposition in the council, as to render nugatory all attempts on the part of the governor to enforce discipline and order. The factious spirit of the council was not without provocation, and, strangely, that provocation was supplied mainly through Clive's instrumentality, in the very way against which he and his brother officials so strongly protested when the company, without his intervention, acted in a similar manner.

Vansittart was appointed governor of Bengal at Clive's suggestion. This offended Holwell, who had rendered more service in the civil department than any of the company's officials, who bravely battled when the council of Calcutta fled, who, during Clive's government, was the most efficient civilian in high office, and upon whom the great dictator devolved important duties. When Clive left India, the government rested upon Holwell *pro tempore*, and he was undoubtedly better fitted for the post than any other member of the council. Mr. Amyatt, a man reckoned by his fellow councillors of consequence, claimed the office on the ground of seniority, and the council and civilians generally regarded it as unjust to place a gentleman from Madras over his head. Clive, for reasons that appeared weighty to himself, recommended Vansittart, who, from the above-named causes, was obstructed, from the moment of his entering office, by those who felt themselves aggrieved. This was not the only cause of their opposition. A large number of the company's ser-

vants were trading on private account in such a manner as to be ruinous to the company. They interfered with the native transit trade in a manner, which, through the various revolutions in the soubahdarship of Bengal that ensued, drew forth the remonstrances of each successive nominee of the British in the native government, while the people of Bengal in vain besought the intervention of their soubahdar. Oppression and plunder were rampant amongst the bullying and imperious English officials everywhere. Mr. Vansittart had not the requisite capacity and energy to put a stop to these things; and when a decided majority of the council was obtained against him, he became almost powerless. Lord Macaulay says of him and his position:—"Mr. Vansittart, the governor, was at the head of a new and anomalous empire. On one side was a band of English functionaries, daring, intelligent, eager to be rich. On the other side was a great native population, helpless, timid, accustomed to crouch under oppression. To keep the stronger race from preying on the weaker, was an undertaking which tasked to the utmost the talents and energy of Clive. Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. The monster caste, as was natural, broke loose from all restraint, and then was seen, what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles—the strength of civilization without its mercy. To all other despotism there is a check—imperfect, indeed, and liable to gross abuse, but still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance—when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment, such as then afflicted Bengal, it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence of the dominant class made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against demons. The only protection which the conquered could find, was in the moderation, the clemency, the enlarged policy of the conqueror. That protection at a later period they found. But at first English power came among them unaccompanied by English morality. There was an interval between the time when they became our subjects, and the time at which we began to reflect that we were bound to discharge towards them the duty of rulers. During that interval the business of a servant of the company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds, as speedily

\* Mill, book iv. chap. v.

as possible, that he might return home before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, buy rotten boroughs in Cornwall, and to give balls in St. James's Square."

This description is not so overdrawn as not to describe generally the condition of things, and show how helpless was the governor in the transactions which took place under his government, financial and military, among the English themselves in their relations to native princes and states, and to the unfortunate Bengalees who groaned beneath their rapacity and oppression. In the narrative of Mr. Vansittart himself, published after his resignation of the government of the presidency, there is at once the clearest and most concise account that has ever appeared of its real condition, and of the English interest in Bengal at the period of Mr. Vansittart's arrival. It is fortunate that the statements of Mr. Vansittart himself are still in existence, as they describe with truth and simplicity a period amongst the most remarkable and eventful epochs in the history of the British empire in India. The events of that time, and the part taken in them by our countrymen, are amongst those most discussed by critics and historians of the present day. The originality and importance of the document excuse its length. The condensation of its style, and the authority of the writer, alike forbid abridgment. Mr. Vansittart states:—"It is foreign to my purpose to enter into any detail of the transactions of Meer Jaffier's government, from the time of his being raised to the soubahdarship till the month of July, 1760, when I came to Bengal, to succeed Colonel Clive. It is enough if I give a plain and distinct view of the situation in which I found his affairs, and the company's. The greatest part of the nabob's and the English forces was at Patna, to oppose the shah-zada, who, for three years successively, had invaded the province, and at this time was more powerful than ever, by the number of disaffected zemindars who had joined him, or espoused his interest, in different parts of the country. The nabob's army consisted as usual of a great number of undisciplined people, who were never regularly paid, but were kept together by the promises of Saddoc Allee Cawn,\* the nabob's son, who commanded them, that he would be answerable for their arrears one time or other. Being disappointed of these hopes by the death of the nabob's son, who was killed by lightning, the 3rd of July, their clamorous demands could no longer be restrained, and a general plunder and desertion was daily expected. Colonel Calliaud, who commanded the English

\* Commonly called the Chuta nabob.

forces after Colonel Clive's departure for Europe, stopped these clamours for a moment, by his promises to secure the payment of their arrears from the nabob; but the English troops were in little better condition than the nabob's; they had two or three months' arrears due to them, the nabob having failed in the payment of the sum stipulated for their maintenance, which was a lac of rupees a month, and the low state of the treasury at Calcutta not admitting of the deficiency being supplied from thence. The effects of this were seen by the desertion of many of our men; and the army, thus situated, was within thirty miles of the shah-zada's whole force. The situation of affairs at Moorshebadad, where the nabob resided, was still more alarming. Far from being in a condition to pay off the arrears of his troops at Patna, he had a large number of the same undisciplined rabble about his person, and was no less in arrears to them; these also losing their best dependence, by the death of the nabob's son, could no longer be satisfied with promises, but insisted, in a most tumultuous manner, on immediate payment. More than once they surrounded the palace, abused the principal officers in the most opprobrious language, and daily threatened the nabob's life; through the weakness of his government, and the general disaffection of the people, the revenues of most parts of the province were withheld by the zemindars, and the nabob had so little attention to, or capacity for business, that what little was collected was, in a great measure, appropriated by his favourites to their own profit. The Beerboom rajah, whose country is situated within a few miles of the capital, Moorshebadad, had declared for the shah-zadah, and had raised a force, with which he threatened to attack the city; and the nabob had so little power of opposing him, that a body of troops, which were ordered out against him in the month of June, refused to march, and were yet in the suburbs, when I arrived there in the month of October. Upon the whole, there was the greatest reason to apprehend, that the disorderly troops would lay waste and plunder the city, and put an end at once to the nabob's government and life. At Calcutta, the treasury was so low, and our resources so much drained, that we were obliged to put an entire stop to the investment, and it was with the utmost difficulty the current expenses of the settlement could be provided for. The lac of rupees, which the nabob was to pay monthly for the field-expenses of our troops, remained, as I before observed, two or three months in arrears; and even supposing it to have been regularly paid, was very insufficient for the intended

use; so that the company, upon this footing, would have suffered a considerable loss by their alliance with the nabob, as often as the situation of affairs required their troops to be in the field, of which the appearance of troubles on every side afforded no prospect of an end. The Burdwan and Nuddea countries had been assigned to the company, from April, 1758, to April, 1760, for the payment of the sums stipulated in the treaty, for the restitution of the company's and private losses by the capture of Calcutta. Of that amount about twenty lacs remained due, at the time of my arrival, although the term of the assignment had been expired some months: and the nabob, at the same time that he could find no means of discharging this balance, insisted on the lands being restored to him, offering a security of jewels in their stead. He sent the Royroyan, one of his principal officers, to Calcutta, to make this demand, and at the same time to request the loan of a sum of money to assist him in his distress. The last was a proposal we had it not in our power to comply with; but the first could not in justice be refused, as he was willing to give other security, in lieu of the lands before assigned; so that we were absolutely left without any resources for money, and the company sent out none from Europe. To add to our difficulties, Madras and Bombay were told that they must depend on supplies from Bengal; and in the midst of this distress, not only the dangerous state of the province obliged us to keep all our forces in the field, at an immense expense, but a still more interesting object for the English nation in India, I mean the success of the undertaking against Pondicherry, which was then invested, depended, in a great measure, on a supply of money. The nabob, through an habitual indolence, was quite incapable of managing his government in such critical circumstances; and the sudden and unfortunate death of his son had thrown him into such a state of dejection that he would not even try to exert the little strength which his faculties had left. Unable as the nabob was to help himself, it was the universal opinion, founded on the experience of his former conduct, that he would rather have seen himself and the province involved in one general ruin, than have given us the means of saving him, by putting more power and more resources of money in our hands. The Dutch director's letters to him, and his behaviour at the time their forces came into the country, are a public testimony of his desire to reduce our power, instead of augmenting it: I asked a small favour of him for the company, a little after my arrival, as much with a view of sounding his disposition,

as through a desire of obtaining it. It was the grant of the Chittagong province, in farm to the company, on the same terms as it was held by the then fougadar, or if that was disagreeable, the leave only of establishing a factory there for trade; but he positively refused to admit of either. I determined not to suffer the affairs of the nation and the company to fall under the ruin they were threatened with, without making an attempt to save them, and far from intending any injury to the nabob, I considered the preservation of his life and government as equally depending with our own interests, on the immediate prosecution of some methods for remedying the difficulties with which we were surrounded. One principal circumstance of the impending evils suggested the first hopes of a reformation. The death of the nabob's son had cut off the heir-apparent of the government: he had two sons by concubines, and a grandson, the child of his deceased son, by a concubine also; the eldest of his two sons was little above ten years old, and his grandson an infant of a few months, so that they were incapable of taking care of the business, supposing the objection of their illegitimacy to be of no weight. In these circumstances, the whole province seemed to turn their eyes on Meer Cossim, who was married to Meer Jaffier's daughter, his only surviving legitimate child; was esteemed a capable man of business, and had been the means of preserving the city from plunder, and the nabob from destruction, by an immediate payment of three lacs of rupees to his troops, and becoming a security for their arrears at the time of their tumultuously surrounding the palace; and this he did, upon promise of being appointed to the vacant offices of his deceased son, and declared his successor. I found Mr. Holwell and the select committee had strongly recommended to the nabob to perform this promise; on the other hand, Mr. Amyatt and Colonel Halliaud had wrote to him in favour of his infant grandson, representing that the troops at Patna insisted on his being named to the vacant offices, and that the Raja Rajebullub, late dewan to the nabob's deceased son, should have the management of them during his minority. The nabob seemingly acquiesced in both recommendations, but continued wavering in his choice, in such a manner, as showed that the increase of the English influence was the event that he most dreaded in the appointment of either. This is the only clue which can lead to the motives of the many opposite resolutions which were taken up by the nabob, upon this affair, in the small space of time in which it was suspended. His inclinations first led him to

accept the advice offered him by Colonel Calliaud, in favour of his grandson; but when that advice was urged in more pressing and peremptory style, and Rajebullub, by his emissaries and friends at Durbar, too solicitously laboured to bring about the same design, the nabob became jealous of his growing power, and suddenly declared his resolution to support Meer Cossim in his pretensions, as will appear by the letter he wrote Mr. Holwell and Colonel Calliaud upon this subject. On the other hand, the nabob perceiving that Meer Cossim was warmly supported by Mr. Holwell, appears to have formed the wild scheme of shaking off both, by throwing all the chief offices of the government into the hands of a stranger, named Mirza Daood, who had for some years enjoyed the protection of this court in the character of a prince of the royal blood of Persia. Him the nabob formally contracted to the natural daughter of his deceased son, but a few days after the declaration made in favour of Meer Cossim, who, apprehensive of being disappointed in his hopes, by the jealousy and irresolution of the nabob, formed the pretence of negotiating the restoration of Burdwan, and the other assigned lands, to obtain his leave to come down to Calcutta. He arrived there about the middle of September. As he came down with these fears and suspicions of the nabob's disinclination to him, for the favour already shown him by the English, it naturally led him to fall in with any measures which might be proposed by them, as a means of securing the continuation of the same interest in his behalf."

In the foregoing narrative, events are referred to which were not recorded in former pages of this history—those connected with a new revolution in Bengal, and the dethronement of Meer Jaffier. This was effected in the manner and temper recorded in the narrative of Mr. Vansittart. Meer Jaffier refused to hold any mere nominal possession of the soubahdarship, and retired to Calcutta, there to live under the protection of the English. He declared that Meer Cossim was a man of too ambitious a character to be bound by treaty, or ties of affinity, and would not trust himself within the limits of his power. This estimate of his son-in-law's character proved ultimately too true.

Among the difficulties which beset the new British governor was a jealousy among the military commanders. Major Carnac arrived to succeed Colonel Calliaud. The army then chiefly lay at Patna, after the death of Meeran. Mr. Vansittart was unwilling to disturb Colonel Calliaud in his command, at a juncture which still seemed critical, seeing

that the colonel was well acquainted with men and with affairs at Patna, of which the major was necessarily ignorant. That officer, however, burned to be in command. Ellis, ever ready for violent measures and complaints, made this a matter of discussion in the council, and Vansittart was tormented by his own officers, at a time which required the exercise of their united powers for the common good. All these persons entered into fiercer discussions with one another, and with the governor, concerning the deposition of Meer Jaffier, and the eligibility of his successor.

It is difficult to see what other course was open to the governor than that which he took. Professor Wilson thinks it was impolitic, and thus expresses his views:—"Objections to the removal of Meer Jaffier were made not only by those whose personal feelings might be suspected. The scheme was originally Mr. Holwell's, who communicated in April, to Colonel Calliaud, his anticipation of the necessity of deposing Meer Jaffier. The colonel, in reply, observes, 'Bad as the man may be whose cause we now support, I cannot be of opinion that we can get rid of him for a better, without running the risk of much greater inconveniences attending on such a change than those we now labour under. I presume the establishing tranquillity in these provinces would restore to us all the advantages of trade we can wish, for the profit and honour of our employers, and I think we bid fairer to bring that tranquillity about by our present influence over the soubahdar, and by supporting him, than by any change that can be made.\*' The removal of Jaffier was an ill-advised measure; there was no absolute impossibility in his performing his engagements with the English, or paying his own troops, for both objects were speedily accomplished by his successor, and he created no new resources. The same means of acquitting his obligations, were in Meer Jaffier's reach. There only wanted such support as should enable him, and such control as should compel him, to discharge those demands to which he had rendered himself liable, and the due acquittance of which was essential to the maintenance of that English force upon which his own power, and even his existence depended. Had Clive remained in Bengal, there would probably have been no revolution."

Whatever might have been the policy of Clive, that of Cossim was soon made intelligible, "For, aware that money was the pillar by which alone he could stand, he made so great exertions that, notwithstanding the treasury of Meer Jaffier was found almost empty, he

\* Scrafton's *Observations on Vansittart's Narrative*, p. 12.

paid in the course of a few months the arrears of the English troops at Patna; so far satisfied the troops of the soubahdar, both at Moorshedabad and Patna, that they were reduced to order, and ready to take the field; and provided six or seven lacs in discharge of his engagements with the company, insomuch that the presidency were enabled in November to send two lacs and a half to Madras, whence a letter had been received, declaring that without a supply the siege of Pondicherry must be raised. In the month of January, Major Carnac arrived at Patna, and took the command of the troops. The province of Bahar had suffered so much from the repeated incursions of the emperor; and the finances both of the nabob and of the company were so much exhausted by the expense of the army required to oppose him, that the importance was strongly felt of driving him finally from that part of the country. The rains were no sooner at an end than the English commander, accompanied by the troops of Ramnarain, and those which had belonged to Meeran, advanced towards the emperor, who was stationed at Gyah Maunpore. The unhappy monarch made what exertions he could to increase his feeble army; but Carnac reached his camp by three days' march; forced him to an engagement, and gained a victory.\*

This engagement redounded greatly to the glory of the English. Law, the French commander, was made prisoner, and his forces entirely dispersed. The following graphic account of incidents connected with the capture of M. Law, is from the pen of a native and a Mohammedan:—"When the emperor left the field of battle, the handful of troops that followed M. Law, discouraged by his flight, and tired of the wandering life which they had hitherto led in his service, turned about likewise, and followed the emperor. M. Law, finding himself abandoned and alone, resolved not to turn his back; he bestrode one of his guns, and remained firm in that posture, waiting for the moment of his death. This being reported to Major Carnac, he detached himself from his main body, with Captain Knox and some other officers, and he advanced to the man on the gun, without taking with him either a guard or any Talingas (sepoys) at all. Being arrived near, this troop alighted from their horses, and pulling their caps from their heads, they swept the air with them, as if to make him a *salâm*: and this salute being returned by M. Law in the same manner, some parley in their language ensued. The major, after paying high encomiums to M. Law for his perseverance,

\* Mill, vol. iii. book iv. chap. v.

conduct, and bravery, added these words:—"You have done everything which could be expected from a brave man; and your name shall be undoubtedly transmitted to posterity by the pen of history: now loosen your sword from your loins, come amongst us, and abandon all thoughts of contending with the English." The other answered, "That if they would accept of his surrendering himself just as he was, he had no objection; but that as to surrendering himself with the disgrace of being without his sword, it was a shame he would never submit to; and that they might take his life if they were not satisfied with that condition." The English commanders, admiring his firmness, consented to his surrendering himself in the manner he wished: after which the major, with his officers, shook hands with him, in their European manner, and every sentiment of enmity was instantly dismissed on both sides. At the same time the major sent for his own palankeen, made him sit in it, and he was sent to camp. M. Law, unwilling to see or be seen, shut up the curtains of the palankeen for fear of being recognised by any of his friends at camp; but yet some of his acquaintances, hearing of his being arrived, went to him. The major, who had excused him from appearing in public, informed them that they could not see him for some days, as he was too much vexed to receive any company. Ahmed Khan Koteishce, who was an impertinent talker, having come to look at him, thought to pay his court to the English by joking at the man's defeat; a behaviour that has nothing strange, if we consider the times in which we live, and the company he was accustomed to frequent; and it was in that notion of his, doubtless, that with much pertness of voice and air, he asked him this question; 'And Biby (Lady) Law, where is she?' The major and officers present, shocked at the impropriety of the question, reprimanded him with a severe look, and very severe expressions: 'This man,' they said, 'has fought bravely, and deserves the attention of all brave men; the impertinences which you have been offering him may be customary amongst your friends and your nation, but cannot be suffered in ours, which has it for a standing rule, never to offer an injury to a vanquished foe.' Ahmed Khan, checked by this reprimand, held his tongue, and did not answer a word. He tarried about one hour more in his visit, and then went away much abashed; and although he was a commander of importance, and one to whom much honour had been always paid, no one did speak to him any more, or made a show of standing up at his departure. This reprimand did much honour to the English;

and, it must be acknowledged, to the honour of those strangers, that as their conduct in war and in battle is worthy of admiration, so, on the other hand, nothing is more modest and more becoming than their behaviour to an enemy, whether in the heat of action, or in the pride of success and victory; these people seem to act entirely according to the rules observed by our ancient commanders, and our men of genius."\*

After the battle, Major Carnac opened negotiations with the emperor, through Rajah Shitabroy, and subsequently visited the im-

perial camp. The emperor accompanied him thence to Patna. Meer Cossim regarded the good terms, upon which the emperor had entered with the English, dangerous to his own power. He arrived at Patna, but embarrassed the imperial alliance in every way he could devise, and refused to pay his respects to the emperor, until Major Carnac effected a compromise. Finally, having received an imperial investiture of the soubahdarship, he agreed to pay as tribute to the court of Delhi, twenty-four lacs of rupees annually.

## CHAPTER LXXVI.

AFFAIRS IN BENGAL—VIOLENT AND FRAUDULENT CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH—DISPUTES BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF CALCUTTA—REVENUE CONTESTS BETWEEN THE OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL AND THOSE OF THE SOUBAH DAR—COMMENCEMENT OF WAR BY THE BRITISH—SERIES OF VICTORIES—MASSACRE OF THE ENGLISH AT PATNA—EXPULSION OF MEER COSSIM FROM BENGAL.

ON the return of the emperor towards his capital, he was escorted by Major Carnac, to the limits of Bahar, where he tendered to the English the dewance of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa, and promised firmans, as soon as "petitions" for them should be formally presented. Meer Cossim, offended by these proceedings, soon showed that he was not less hostile at heart to the English than any of his predecessors. His whole attention was divided between disputes with the British officials, and extortion of money from his own. He was restrained by no sense of the injustice of such deeds, and spared none who refused to find money when he chose to demand it. It would occupy many volumes to describe the rapid passage of events during the government of Mr. Vansittart. The deterioration of the English was rapid. This, with the intrigues and efforts made against British influence by the nabobs, involved terrible consequences.

One prominent incident in the history of the times was the defiance of law, both English and native, which characterised the British traders. The company's servants trading on their own account, and native merchants buying the authority of the company's officers, carried on a system of smuggling, of fraud, and of oppression, which no pen could adequately describe. In order to terminate, if possible, the disputes between the soubahdar and the English traders, Mr. Vansittart, accompanied by Mr. Hastings, sought an interview with the former: through-

out these contentions Mr. Hastings had displayed a strong sense of justice. By his lucid statements and arguments he convinced the governor of the injustice offered to the soubahdar by the English agents, supported by the higher officials and members of council, and he aided the governor in his efforts to induce the council to put a stop to the lawlessness of the company's servants. On the last day of November, 1762, these three important persons met at Mongheer. The soubahdar laid the long list of grievances inflicted upon him by the company's servants before the governor, who soon satisfied the prince that, so far as he and Mr. Hastings were concerned, the insults, indignities, and pecuniary injuries of which the prince complained were unequivocally condemned. It was agreed that all memory of these transactions should be obliterated, and that mutual efforts should be made to put a stop to their recurrence. The soubahdar demanded that the inland trade should be wholly given up by the English. Mr. Vansittart proposed that the trade should be open to all upon a duty payable alike by natives and English. To this the soubahdar showed extreme aversion, but at last gave his sanction. A treaty was accordingly drawn up by Hastings, fixing the duty at nine per cent. on all articles; and Mr. Vansittart returned to Calcutta in January, 1763. On arriving at his seat of government, he found the English in great commotion, denouncing all that he and Hastings had performed. The council passed a resolution that the treaty was null, and that they would pay

\* *Seer Mutakhareen*, vol. ii. pp. 165, 166.

no duties except  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on salt, as a compliment to the soubahdar. They also resolved that their agents should no longer be amenable to the native tribunals, but that the native officers and traders should be amenable to the English agents in the nearest factory. The spirit and procedure of the council was, in various respects, unjust and fraudulent; but they complained that the governor had made concessions not demanded by justice, and which were injurious to their interests. They considered that the various firmans of the Mogul entitled them to a free trade in the provinces, although the soubahdars and nabobs, where the English forces were weak, had withheld the privilege, and imposed duties contrary to it. Neither Mr. Vansittart nor Mr. Hastings gave, on that occasion, satisfactory replies to these allegations, which were supported by able arguments on the part of several members, especially Mr. Hayes.\*

Meer Jaffier, then resident at Calcutta, authorized the governor's opponents in the council to state that his interpretation of firmans and treaties accorded with theirs. This was said by him to inflame the dispute with Meer Cossim, for his own purposes, for he had never acted upon his own interpretation when he had the opportunity; and when his intrigues issued in his being once more promoted to the sumnid, he was as eager as Meer Cossim had been to exclude the English from the country trade, or to levy duties when that could not be effected. The result of the disapproval of the governor's treaty and correspondence with the soubahdar was to render all accommodation impossible, and to throw the whole of Bengal into a state of alarm. The soubahdar's servants were lying, fraudulent, and tyrannical wherever the English were weak; the conduct of the English was similar, and thus a sort of civil war between both was maintained, before any appeal to arms was made by their governments.

A faithful historian can scarcely have a more painful task than to wade through the voluminous correspondence carried on between Mr. Vansittart and his officers, and between him and the soubahdar, or, as Mr. Vansittart, in his correspondence, always called him, the nabob. Still more painful is it to peruse the voluminous debates and minutes of the council of Calcutta upon the subjects of this correspondence, and the complaints and recriminations of the officers of the company, and those of the soubahdar. So discreditable was the conduct of the English in Bengal during the year 1763, that it leaves

a lasting stain upon the name of our country. The soubahdar, by vigorous efforts, succeeded at last in suppressing violent and fraudulent conduct on the part of his own servants, as far as, perhaps, any governor, British or native, has ever succeeded in doing in that country. Notwithstanding his exactions on coming to the throne, the firmness and equity of his administration were soon felt everywhere among his own people, and, whatever were his faults at first, he redeemed them by the most sedulous care, to leave the dishonest English no pretexts for plunder or war. All his fidelity, activity, and intelligence, did not avail him. Mr. Vansittart was well satisfied with his conduct, but the governor obtained no support in the council, except from Mr. Hastings, whose conduct was humane, just, and honourable in these transactions. The English gradually threw off all disguise, refused to pay the revenues sanctioned by the treaty, plundered the native cultivators and merchants, beat, and often murdered the native officers of justice, police, and revenue; insulted, and defied the person of the soubahdar openly, and regulated their whole conduct as if the council and its agents were a banditti organized under the pretence of trade. The plunder thus accumulated was not passed to the account of the company, whose zealous servants the perpetrators professed to be, but was grasped for their private advantage, while the company's affairs were wholly neglected, and heavy expenses incurred in its name. Mr. Vansittart being always in a minority, himself and Hastings being alone on the side of treaty and integrity, he was obliged to write letters to the nabob in the name of the council, of which he and Hastings totally disapproved. The following specimens of the correspondence will enlighten the reader as to the character of the English at that period. They are written by the nabob (properly soubahdar) to Mr. Vansittart, as governor, containing extracts from the correspondence of the latter to which they were in reply. They disclose a dignity, mingled with despair and indignation, on the part of the soubahdar, which gave to his protests and complaints a tone and manner that commanded the sympathy of the governor and of Mr. Hastings.

*Copy of a Letter from the Nabob to the Governor. Dated March 5, 1763.*

I have had the pleasure duly to receive three of your favours, dated the 7th and 8th of Shaaban, and understand the particulars mentioned in them.

At a time when this government was loaded with a balance of revenues due to the king, the arrears of the troops, and debts owing to the English, I marched out of Bengal, and repaired to the extremity of the province of

\* *A Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal, from 1760 to 1764*, vol. ii. By Mr. Henry Vansittart.

Bahar, in order to settle these matters. That country being thus left without a ruler, every village and district became ruined by the oppressions of the English agents and gomastahs, an entire stop was put to collecting the revenues, and the merchants, and the poor, and all my officers, and muttaseddees of the public and private receipts of custom, were distressed, and deprived of their daily bread; and I am a sufferer in the revenues due to my administration, by near a crore of rupees. I have in the meanwhile made continual complaints and representations of this injustice, and informed you particularly and circumstantially of all matters: nevertheless, you have been pleased to observe that my officers are to blame.

When you favoured me with a visit at Mongheer, I laid before you all my concerns. You were very earnest in settling all disputes between my government, and the English company and gentlemen, and their gomastahs: and you in some measure comforted me, and persuaded me that "from that time business would be carried on in a proper manner, and my government neither injured, oppressed, or damaged." Afterwards, on your return to Calcutta, contrary to your agreement with me, you detached forces, to carry on the business of the company and English gentlemen by compulsion, and to beat and chastise my officers, if they offered to speak a word. For these three years I have not got a single rupee, nor a thousand rupees; nor one piece, nor ten pieces of cloth; nor a bundle of broad cloth, nor ten bundles; nor a pair of scissors, nor so much as a clasp-knife, from the English gentlemen, or their gomastahs; at the same time, they have by violence levied fines and penalties, and sums for losses in their trade, on my officers, and still continue to levy them; and if any of my officers refuses to submit to this, they pour a storm of complaints on his head.

Lately you have repeatedly ordered me "to let the business of the company, and the English gentlemen, and their gomastahs, go on as was customary heretofore in the different parts of the provinces of Bengal and Bahar; to suffer the money and bullion of your factories to be coined into siccas in my mints; and to have the wicket and intrenchments in the city of Patna opened." I not having it in my power to refuse, have given you the free use of my mint, and directed the wicket to be opened, and a stop to be put to collecting customs upon traffic in the commodities of my country, from all merchants, pykars, and dilolls, in the provinces of Bahar and Bengal; and I have had all gauts and chokeys, both in the city and country round about, entirely removed.

All these my losses are owing entirely to the favour and indulgence of the council; because that my being like the nabob Meer Jaffier indebted to his majesty, and embarrassed by my troops, and reduced to his situation, is what they approve of. However, I can never approve of my people and merchants being distressed, my country oppressed, myself despised, and subjected to daily insults, and my officers and servants ill-treated. I have therefore chosen to give up all those points to you. Now I am in expectation of your answer, to inform me if my life is safe; or if there is anything else to be done?

*From the Nabob to the Governor. Dated March 5, 1763.*

Your friendly letter, dated the 8th of Shaaban, is arrived, and I am happy with the news of your welfare.

You write that the opinion of the council is as follows:—"They are all very desirous of assisting and supporting me in my government, but cannot bear with patience, that my officers should impede or damage their commerce; that the report of your setting up another nabob is the weak insinuation of designing men; that the resolution of the board is, to make such an agreement in pursuance of the royal firman, and the rules of equity, as may leave

no room for dispute in future, between my officers and their gomastahs." How can I bring myself firmly to credit this, since Mr. Ellis is one of the council, who, for these two years past, has been endeavouring all in his power to hurt my affairs, and make me appear little in the eyes of the world; nay, is at this time taking pains daily to involve me in trouble, parading his companies of sepoys to provoke me; and omitting no opportunity of depreciating me both in this my own country, and to Suraj-ad-Dowlah, and other great men at court, sending all whatever he can devise to my discredit, by means of Shitabroy, to Suraj-ad-Dowlah, &c., and saying also whatever comes uppermost in his mind to my prejudice in public assemblies?

In regard to what you write concerning the royal firman, and your having in view the preparation of another treaty; when you favoured me with your company at Mongheer, I told you frequently, that "the power of your people was great, but I had little to oppose it. I desired you to consider, nor entertain the notion, that any agreement would be binding with people accustomed to acts of oppression." Is not this an instance of oppression, that the saltpetre farms, which I have allowed unto you gentlemen, upon the produce of which you used to pay formerly three, and three and half rupees per maund, you now forcibly hold at one and three-fourth of a rupee, plundering and injuring my people? In this manner my country is to go to ruin, and I may not utter a word. Besides all this, you write, that it is my own officers who create these disturbances, exercise oppression, and injure the saltpetre farm. This being the case, how can any treaty stand good between us? And how can it take effect, if such oppression continues? Besides, as you have dispatched the company's troops to chastise my officers, if they but murmur at these evils, why need you trouble yourselves to make any other treaty? In my service, there is not one who can prejudice me against you in any affair. Under you there is Mr. Ellis, who fails not to prejudice you with evil insinuations against me, as you must see and be sensible, though you connive at it, and say nothing on the subject; but you are pleased to think (I do know upon what grounds) that I have evil-minded people in my service.

I am at a loss how to act under these censures, and must own myself insufficient, if regulations of this nature take place. Be pleased, therefore, to set me free from the uneasiness of such an administration; and set up a person for conducting it, whom the council may better approve.

Full well I know, that they will both condemn me, and injure your good name, and bring this about at last. Why do they wait for a charge against me? It is not the part of honest men, to bring an unjust charge against any one, with a view to compass other designs; it is better that you do it at this time.

*Copy of a Letter from the Nabob to the Governor. Dated March 14, 1763.*

It has been owing solely to the friendship and regard which I bear to you, that I have hitherto constantly borne in my mind the marks of your favour; and, for the friendship and kindness which you have shown to me, I have put up with everything until now that my patience is quite exhausted. Whatever is to be done, do you, sir, do it yourself; why should you cause my authority to be insulted, and my honour injured, by your servants, and people of low character? One man may easily continue in friendship to one man; but to be dependent upon ten people, is beyond the power of man.

I have, in no wise, been deficient in the observance of the treaties which you made with me, but, from the be-



gunning, have scrupulously complied with all my agreements.

At this time, that you have been pleased to write to me to keep open the wicket, and intrenchment in the city of Patna, and for trade to go on as usual, I paid all due respect to your letter, and immediately complied with its contents. I had sent for Mohammed Allee Beg from Dacca, and I was on my way from Patna towards Rajmahal, and had reached Barr, when Mr. Ellis sent three companies of sepoy, with two guns, in order to surround my fortress of Taaajepoor, besides other companies towards Durbunga, Mow, Teegra, Sircar Sarum, Tekarry, and other districts in different parts of the province, by which my affairs have been so much hurt, that an entire stop is put to the collection of my revenues.

I knew not in what light to consider all these disturbances, plunderings, and ravages; so, upon information of this news, I dispatched Mohammed Ameen Cawn, one of my jemmatdars, towards Taaajepoor, that he might inquire particularly, and bring me intelligence of the cause of so much disorder. He had not reached the place, before the companies above-mentioned had taken hold of Aebur Allee, Naib of Sheer Zaman, my amil at Taaajepoor, and carried him away to Patna. My jemmatdar wrote me these particulars; in answer to which, I sent him orders to bring your gomastah, residing at the factory of Taaajepoor, to me, that I might inquire of him, why my amil had been seized and carried away.

When Mohammed Ameer Cawn drew nigh to the factory, your sepoy there, by order of the gomastah, fired upon him without challenging him. My jemmatdar, having no other resource, made use of the force that he had, seized your gomastah, and brought him to me. I examined into this affair in the best manner, and then dismissed your gomastah. I found from him, that my amil was by no means in fault; but Ellis, having fixed the blame of all these tumults and disorders upon my amils, under pretence of the saltpetre, merely from his own hatred to me, and violence of temper, has created these disturbances, and perseveres in them. You wrote me heretofore, that by keeping the wicket in the city of Patna shut, a report would in all probability prevail amongst the people, that the company and I were at variance. Ellis for two years past has been making all these disturbances, in order to demean me, and injure my affairs. Ought I not to be informed, how I am to consider these proceedings, and what is the reason of them? You are my friends, bound to free me from all these insults, which I never can bear with. Since the said gentleman has proceeded to acts of violence against my officers, should my officers, for the sake of their characters, stand upon the defensive, you are not to reproach me with it; but if you are inclined to allow of Mr. Ellis's actions, you will do well to give the country to him, that you and I may be freed from the vexations of it; for I am convinced, that the council will not put an end to these disputes.

I have halted here at Barr two days, on account of this affair; to-morrow I shall march towards Mongheer.

The soubahdar, in order to deal justly with his own people, and, as he hoped, remove all complaints on the part of the British, ordered the entire remission of duties upon the inland trade to English and native merchants alike. This threw the English into a state of panic and rage. They declared it was ruinous to their trade, and meant by the soubahdar to be so. That he had no right, without permission of the emperor, to remit the duties levied upon the native merchants, and no right to levy any duties upon the English. This amounted to a demand for the exclusive trade of the

soubahdar's dominions; and as the East India Company did not profit at all by the inland trade, the demand was in favour of the company's servants, by those servants to be enforced at the expense of the company. It is difficult to conceive a more entire blindness to justice. Yet the council, without shame, inveighed against the governor and Mr. Hastings, because they pointed out the absurdity of such claims, and the monstrous oppression of enforcing a monopoly of trade against the soubahdar's own subjects in his own dominions.

Meantime, violence and outrage on the part of the English increased, and nothing was left for Meer Cossim and his servants but to oppose violence by authority, and force by force. Whatever the bad conduct of the English, more especially of their chief officers, and the majority by whom the governor was opposed in council, the policy of many of the soubahdar's chief officers was aggravating and unjust. As illustrating this, a single case may be named. At Luckypoor, one Mohammed Gazy had been employed in the service of the English factory. To punish this person for his attachment to the English, and probably also with the view of insulting the English themselves, the soubahdar's officer, Syed Buddul Cawn, placed a guard upon his house. Mr. Middleton, chief of the factory, remonstrated upon the oppression thus practised upon a person whose only offence was his intimate service with the English. The native officer refused to release the person so flagrantly wronged, and pleaded that his doing so would be against superior orders—those of Mohammed Allee, who had offered many provocations to the English, and always managed badly his part in those disputes when the English were the aggressors. The council ordered Mr. Middleton to cause Syed Buddul Cawn to be seized and sent a prisoner to Calcutta, where he arrived the latter end of March, 1763. He exculpated himself when before the board, by producing the orders on which he had acted. Mohammed Allee's letter was of such a nature as left no doubt of his desire to bring matters to an extremity. Whether this arose from some interested speculation, or from the vanity which led the native chiefs, notwithstanding innumerable defeats, to believe that they could contend with the English, his motives were sufficiently powerful to induce him to defy the company and impose upon the soubahdar by giving him false information. That this was the true state of the case, the orders issued by him to Syed Buddul Cawn sufficiently prove. They were in the following terms:—

*From Mohammed Allee to Syed Buddul Cawn.*

Your agreeable letter is arrived. I fully understand the particulars contained therein, and from the hircarra likewise, I learned the account of the villanies of the English in Luckypoor. I have written pressingly to Aga Mohammed Nizam, and Samadan, and Aumur Sing, and Jungul Sing, to repair all of them with their people unto you. I have also sent perwannahs, with the utmost dispatch, unto the zemindars of Bilwat, Baboopoor, &c., and I have taken engagements from every zemindar's vakcel, about Luckypoor, that their masters, the zemindars, will attend upon you, and act as you shall direct them. It behoves you, with the utmost dispatch, to repair thither immediately, and blockade the passages for going in and coming out on all sides of Luckypoor; and place strong sentinels, that no person whatever may pass or re-pass to and from Luckypoor, and that asoul does not escape. Of those who claim the English protection, and make use of their name, take two or three and crucify them, and seize their houses and effects. Lay hold of their wives and children, and send them straightway to me. Be sure not to fail in this respect, his excellency having honoured me with his orders to this purpose, as you must be informed from the copy of the governor's engagement, and of his excellency's perwannah, in consequence, which I heretofore sent you; and do not entertain the least diffidence. Regard this my short letter in the light of a thousand letters, and act accordingly. Moreover, let guards be placed to keep a good look-out about Luckypoor, and the parts adjacent, until the nabob's orders arrive, when they will proceed to act as I shall write to you. At present surround it on all sides, and keep a constant watch.

You will take extraordinary good care of the Europeans at Luckypoor, that they get no intelligence from any of their dependents, either by land or water; and for security you will send two hundred men, with a commander whom you can rely upon, and direct them, above all things, to be ready for action both night and day.

The consequences of such proceedings were thus noticed by Mr. Vansittart himself, in the *exposé* of his motives and conduct in these affairs, afterwards given by him:—"Such a declaration of his inveteracy to the English, as was expressed in these letters of Mohammed Allee's, and the many instances which he had given of it throughout his whole conduct, from his first appointment, justly excited the indignation of the whole board. The most violent readily seized this occasion, to infer a fixed resolution in the nabob to break with us; and that the appointment of such a man as Mohammed Allee, with such extraordinary powers, and his conduct in the execution of them, were only in consequence of that resolution. It was, therefore, warmly urged to prevent the nabob's designs, by declaring immediate war against him. This sentiment, however, was opposed by a majority of the board, who judged it most proper, in the present circumstances, to regard the insults as proceeding personally from Mohammed Allee, and to chastise him for it ourselves; since the nabob, to whom we had repeatedly complained against him, had hitherto afforded us no re-

dress; and that the chief and council at Dacca should be ordered to seize, and send him down prisoner to Calcutta. In this alternative I easily joined, as well in the hopes of yet preventing a ruinous and unjustifiable war, as from the conviction of the violent and incendiary spirit of Mohammed Allee; who, if suffered to act longer with impunity, I saw would put it out of my power, or even of the nabob's, to preserve peace between us. It is true, that the nabob, in answer to the demand of the board for his dismissal, declared that he had removed him from his employment, and summoned him to his presence; but as he still continued at Dacca, and the nabob had always endeavoured to vindicate his conduct, it was much to be feared that he would not only escape the punishment he deserved, but perhaps be continued in his authority, and have his hands strengthened with such fresh powers, as might make it dangerous to attempt afterwards to call him to an account. The nabob's behaviour upon this occasion may be easily accounted for, from the precarious situation in which he stood with the English. When I was with him at Mongheer, he assured me that if the complaints which were then alleged against Mohammed Allee, upon inquiry, proved true, he would both dismiss him from his service, and severely punish him. The same assurance he gave me with respect to Sheer Allee, the fougedar of Poorncea, who had been guilty of the like enmity and misbehaviour to the English dependents in that district; and it is very probable that he was sincere in this declaration at that time, since his interest was most materially concerned in removing every cause of disagreement from between us. But when he perceived the strong opposition, formed against him by the general assembly of the council, and that the design of his enemies was levelled openly against his person and government, it is not to be wondered at, that he should be cautious of depriving himself of the assistance of persons the most capable of serving him, and on whose zeal he had so much reason to depend in case of a rupture with the English. In a word, it appears from the nabob's whole behaviour, from the time that the general council was assembled, that he believed his own ruin to be the object of that assembly; and every step taken by the board served but to confirm him the more strongly in that fatal persuasion. Fatal I call it, since, with such a mutual distrust, every accident, however trifling, was easily construed into an intentional act of hostility; and even the necessary precautions of self-defence served but to make the breach irreparable. I believe it will be needless to point out instances of the effects of these pre-

possessions, amongst the many which occur in the minutes of the council, and the nabob's letters which I have already inserted. To the latter I shall add one, as it shows how easily the nabob was led away by every groundless report, and how naturally his apprehensions disposed him to co-operate with the very measures which tended to an open rupture.\*

A deputation was sent by the council from Calcutta to wait upon the soubahdar, and come, if possible, to a mutual understanding. His highness declined receiving the deputation, unless the council recalled the troops which he alleged had been marching from various directions towards his capital. At that time, Mr. Vansittart declared not a soldier had moved from his quarters. The soubahdar had been inspired by his officers, who vainly supposed that by a vigorous effort the English authority might be shaken off. This they were the more readily led to believe, because it was supposed by them that the sepoys in the English service were disloyal, and that the people were so exasperated by the bad conduct of the company's servants, that they were ripe for insurrection.

While the soubahdar was giving implicit credit to every story to the disparagement of the English, the latter, Mr. Vansittart declared, were quite as credulous. Even the council believed representations made to them that the soubahdar had issued orders for all the mulberry-trees to be cut down, in order to destroy the silk trade; and for all the cotton plants to be uprooted, in order to destroy the trade in white cloths. This belief was grounded upon the supposition, that as the English refused to pay duties except on salt, the trade with them was valueless to his highness, and no motive for desiring their presence in India any longer remained. The governor treated those rumours as idle and absurd, but the council resolved to act upon them, and to adopt violent measures, which the governor could only restrain to a certain degree by his authority. The whole behaviour of the council in these matters appears upon the evidence of the minutes in council to be what the governor described it, "scandalous and indecent." In fact, the interest of the company, national honour, the faith of treaties, were all lost sight of in order to accomplish what the grasping avarice of the majority of the council desired. One thing only may be alleged as plausible in behalf of the majority of the council. The president himself (Mr. Vansittart) traded on his private account, and the council believed

that in matters of revenue the soubahdar favoured him, and therefore it was his private interest that the company and individual members of council should be subject to duties from which he, by private management, was able to have himself exempted. The president solemnly denied the truth of these imputations. There were various circumstances which, at all events, naturally led the council to suspect that the private interests of the governor were adverse to those of the council.

Mainly, by the governor's influence, the soubahdar consented to receive the deputation from the council, notwithstanding his previous refusals. He, however, intimated plainly his opinion that the interview could result in no good, as it would be impossible for him to exercise any authority as soubahdar of Bengal while the company treated his orders with contempt, and plundered and ill-used his people as they pleased. His highness could see nothing to negotiate about, for he declared that the English had not left him anything worth the trouble. If they wished to seize upon what belonged to some one else, they had better do so without a deputation to him; or, if the appearance of negotiation was a formality necessary to English measures, he thought they might find somebody else with whom to go through that form, and spare him the torment. Such was the reasoning of his highness, and the bitter irony it contained vexed the English excessively. The nabob, however, met the deputation; but, meanwhile, Ellis, the chief of the English factory at Patna, and the other agents of the company there, did everything in their power to bring on a war for their own private objects, so that the interview began under most inauspicious circumstances. The deputation conducted itself haughtily; the soubahdar petulantly. His highness equivocated and evaded, and it afterwards appeared that he preferred the chances of war to compliance with the demands made to him. The deputation effected nothing. They showed no disposition to concede anything to conciliate the nizâm, as he liked to call himself, and his exasperation was increased by their visit. While they were yet at the court of the soubahdar, some boats with arms arrived on their way to Patna for the use of the English troops there. These were seized, and his highness refused to release them, grounding his refusal on the alleged belief that the arms and ammunition were intended to enable the garrison near Patna to attack that city. He also refused a new demand, that an English agent should reside permanently at his durbar, to prevent disputes from arising for the future. The

\* *Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal, from 1760 to 1764.*

grand point of difference was the demand of the English that no native merchant should be exempted from heavy duties, while they should be exempt from imposts of every kind except such as they chose to grant.

It soon became evident that the soubahdar had been quietly, but vigorously, making preparations for war, but had resolved not to begin the conflict; his purpose being to enter upon hostilities as soon as he was attacked. The council eagerly seized the occasion presented by the irritated and ill-advised conduct of the soubahdar, to force matters to an extreme pass. The governor disapproved of these proceedings, but did not display either the wisdom or decision requisite for counteracting them. Warren Hastings alone withstood the self-assertion, insolence, and aggrandizement of the council. At every meeting he was eloquent on the side of moderation and justice, and his protests against the folly and tyranny of the council are masterpieces of Indian policy and statesmanship. While yet the deputation remained at the court of the soubahdar, he began to offer a series of vindictive provocations which could not fail to issue in war. His "chokies" insulted the deputation of council. Bodies of horse were thrown out for the purpose of intercepting their departure, and finally the sepoys in the English service were tampered with by the soubahdar's agents, until they deserted by hundreds; and the native officers, so much relied upon by the English of that day, were amongst the first who yielded to seduction. This last circumstance compelled the English at once to take measures which the soubahdar considered as nearly tantamount to a declaration of hostilities. He demanded that the English troops should be removed from Patna to Calcutta, or to his own immediate neighbourhood, and informed the deputation that peace or war depended upon compliance with that demand. It became obvious that he had never seriously intended to negotiate on the subject of the duties, and that his compliant policy was merely to gain time to secure his military position and ally to himself the talookdars and zemindars of his own and contiguous territories. His next step was to seize Mr. Hay, as security for certain monies which he insisted the English possessed, but which belonged to him. After this, he proposed in a letter to the governor, that if Mr. Ellis were removed from the chiefship of the factory at Patna, he would negotiate. Before the governor would introduce the subject to the council, Mr. Ellis commenced hostilities, and soon after the chiefs of other English factories adopted aggressive measures, on the plea of necessity. It was now plain that

war had begun. Mr. Ellis, the chief at Patna, backed by the majority of the council at Calcutta, had begun it. The next step was to depose Meer Cossim by order of council, and proclaim another soubahdar in his room. The choice of the council fell upon their old friend and enemy, Meer Jaffier. The whole council favoured this action, except the governor and Mr. Hastings. Advice arrived from Mr. Amyatt from Mongheer, where the soubahdar was, that an Armenian general had marched at the head of a strong reinforcement of "horse, foot, and cannon," to Patna, and that "the Armenians solely managed the soubahdar, and urged the disputes." Mr. Amyatt left the court of the soubahdar under passport, and advised the council of his arrival at Sootee *en route* for Calcutta, where he was daily expected. Soon after a letter reached the governor from Cossimbazar, informing the council that as Mr. Amyatt was passing the city of Moorsshedabad, he was attacked by the soubahdar's forces and killed, with several other gentlemen; his escort having been made prisoners. The day after this intelligence was received, some servants and soldiers who had escaped during the skirmish of Moorsshedabad arrived at Calcutta. They brought the information that the English at Patna had begun the war, and the attack on Mr. Amyatt at Moorshehabad was in reprisal. The council at once, July 7th, 1763, nominated Meer Jaffier to the soubahdarship, declaring war against Meer Cossim.

On the 8th of July, a letter from Meer Cossim confirmed the rumours of active hostilities at Patna. On the 24th of June, the English suddenly attacked the city of Patna at night, and took it by surprise. As soon as the capture was made, a plunder of the city commenced, and so great was the disorder of the British, that a small body of the soubahdar's troops entered the city at noon next day and retook it, putting the plunderers to the sword. The gentlemen of the factory, with the scattered remains of the army, retired across the river, and were all destroyed or captured. The letter of the soubahdar was one of sneering irony, in which he makes the defeat of the violent gang of robbers who managed the affairs of the company at Patna, a ground for demanding the restitution of all the lands of the soubahdarree surrendered by him to the company on his accession to power. His highness conceived himself to be strong enough to make any demands, as the force at Patna constituted the chief English garrison of Bengal, and formed a considerable portion of the whole of the English army in that presidency.

The following extract from the letter of the

soubahdar showed how hopeless it would have been to maintain any further relations with him:—

*Copy of a Letter from the Nabob Cossim Allee Cawn to the Governor. Dated June 28, 1763.*

In my heart I believed Mr. Ellis to be my inveterate enemy, but from his actions, I now find he was inwardly my friend, as appears by this step, which he has added to the others. Like a night robber, he assaulted the Kella of Patna; robbed and plundered the bazar, and all the merchants and inhabitants of the city, ravaging and slaying from the morning to the third pahr (afternoon). When I requested of you two or three hundred muskets laden in boats, you would not consent to it. This unhappy man, in consequence of his inward friendship,\* favoured me, in this fray and slaughter, with all the muskets and cannon of his army, and is himself relieved and eased from his burthen. Since it was never my desire to injure the affairs of the company, whatever loss may have been occasioned by this unhappy man to myself, in this tumult, I pass over: but you, gentlemen, must answer for any injury which the company's affairs have suffered; and since you have unjustly and cruelly ravaged the city, and destroyed the people, and plundered effects to the value of lacs of rupees; it becomes the justice of the company to make reparation to the poor, as formerly was done for Calcutta. You, gentlemen, are wonderful friends; having made a treaty, to which you pledged the name of Jesus Christ, you took from me a country to pay the expenses of your army, with the condition, that your troops should always attend me, and promote my affairs. In effect, you keep up a force for my destruction; since from their hand, such events have proceeded, I am entirely of opinion, that the company should favour me in causing to be delivered to me the rents for three years of my country. Besides this, for the violences and oppressions exercised by the English gomastahs for several years past, in the territories of the Nizamut, and the large sums extorted, and the losses occasioned by them, it is proper and just that the company make restitution at this time. This is all the trouble you need take; in the same manner as you took Burdwan and the other lands, you must favour me in resigning them.

Mr. Vansittart observes in his narrative, that "This was followed by a note from the gentlemen at Cossimbazar, dated the night of the 4th of July, informing us, that the factory was surrounded by a numerous force, and that they expected an attack the next morning."

Mr. Hastings had been so disgusted with the trickery, selfishness, and injustice of the council, that he had resolved to resign his high and honourable place as a member of council. His patriotism, however, became influenced by what he called "the unparalleled acts of barbarity and treachery" with which, on the part of the nabob, the war had opened; and he resolved to give his energies to carry the conflict to a successful issue. It is surprising that Mr. Hastings should consider the acts of Meer Cossim, however barbarous and treacherous, unparalleled in Indian warfare; they were

\* This language is used sarcastically, and betrays the intense bitterness of the soubahdar.

simply in character with Mohammedan usages in war in India and everywhere else. Meer Jaffier left Calcutta on the 11th of July, 1763, to join the army. The detachment he accompanied was commanded by Major Williams. On the 19th, the soubahdar's army engaged the British, for the purpose of defending the Fort of Kutwal, which, it was supposed, might be best defended in the open field. The troops of his highness were defeated, and Kutwal was abandoned. On the 26th the British stormed the lines of Moote-gil, and captured Moorsheadabad; about fifty pieces of cannon were among the trophies. On the 2nd of August a perilous exploit was performed by the English. They crossed a dangerous ravine defended by strong outposts of the enemy. These outposts were driven back, and the British, advancing, found the grand army of the soubahdar drawn up in line of battle upon the plains of Geriah, near Sootee. The British attacked with their usual spirit, and the enemy resisted with unusual obstinacy. For a time the battle appeared to be equal. In a desperate charge by the Bengalees, the English line was broken, and some of their cannon captured. The Rajah Shitabroy distinguished himself with his accustomed gallantry on the side of the English, encouraging the native troops in their service. The British having recovered the temporary reverse, which had nearly cost them the loss of the day, they renewed their assaults with persevering valour, until at last the exhausted enemy fled, leaving the field covered with their slain, and all their cannon and baggage as prizes to the victors. An immediate result of the victory was the capture of a hundred and fifty boats freighted with grain and rice.

The soubahdar's forces continued their disorderly flight to Ouhthanulla, a fort between the river and a chain of hills. This place was defended by an intrenchment, upon which were mounted a hundred pieces of cannon. The ditch was more than fifty feet wide, of considerable depth, and full of water. In front was a quagmire. The only ground upon which an assaulting force could approach was near the river, for the space of one hundred yards. The English there planted batteries and raised works, with the most studied appearance of conducting a regular system of approaches. The object of these proceedings was to draw off the enemy's attention from the real plan of attack. On the 5th of September a fire was opened from the false attack, and such demonstrations made as drew away a large body of the besieged to that quarter; while the English in another direction began the assault. There were

troops enough in that quarter to make an obstinate defence; and only after a furious and sanguinary contest were the English masters of the fort and all its appurtenances of war.

The British have made few conquests in India so creditable to their arms. Their entire force scarcely exceeded three thousand; the enemy were many times that number, and the English officers computed them at sixty thousand. The English having secured the place, advanced to Mongheer. After every victory, they obtained some native adherents to their standard, as they professed to fight for the restoration of a former sovereign, who, although not popular, had adherents.

Meer Cossim fled, leaving a garrison to defend his capital. Here he proved himself to be as bloody-minded as his predecessors, and as Mohammedan rulers generally are. He put to death several of his own relations, who, he supposed, might be made instruments in the hands of the English in consolidating a rival authority. Ramnarain was drowned with a bag of sand round his neck.

As the soubahdar fled to Patna, his thirst for blood increased. The two bankers, Set or Seit, the richest men in India, were both murdered in a manner horribly vindictive. His vengeance pursued their dead bodies, which were given to wild beasts and birds of prey, lest their friends should raise for them a funeral pyre, after the manner of the Hindoos. When the English army advanced, their bones were found in a retired apartment of a house, where they had been secreted by some of their co-religionists.

The English conquered Mongheer, but not until a practicable breach was made. The war under Adams had been conducted humanely. After the victory at Oodwa Nulla, in which the abettors of the soubahdar were so signally defeated, one thousand prisoners were made, among whom were many Mohammedan gentlemen, officers in the army of his highness. The whole of these Adams generously released.

On the 9th of September, as the major advanced to Patna, the soubahdar wrote to him thence, threatening to kill all the English who had fallen into his hands, if the major did not abandon the war. That officer replied that the war must be carried on whatever were the consequences, and that it rested with his highness whether it should be waged humanely or become a war of sanguinary reprisals. The governor wrote to the same effect, but neither the mild remonstrance of the latter nor the threats of the commander had any weight with Cossim. He ordered all the prisoners in his power to be massacred. Ellis,

by whom the war had been provoked, and who signally merited retribution, with fourteen of the company's civil and military servants, various other gentlemen, and a hundred private men, were murdered. On a previous page the gallantry of Dr. Fullerton was recorded. This officer was the only person who escaped the massacre. He saw Meer Cossim immediately afterwards, and he wrote to the board a letter, from which the following is an extract:—"Mr. Ellis, with the rest of the gentlemen, were inhumanly butchered by Shimroo,\* who came that evening to the place with two companies (he had the day before sent for all the knives and forks from the gentlemen); he surrounded the house with his people, and went into a little outer square, and sent for Messrs. Ellis, Hay,† and Lushington, and with them came six other gentlemen, who were all terribly mangled, and cut to pieces, and their bodies thrown into a well in the square, and it filled up; then the sepoy were sent into the large square, and fired on the gentlemen there, and, rushing upon them, cut them into pieces, in the most inhuman manner, and they were thrown into another large well, which was likewise filled up. On the 7th, the nabob sent for me, and told me to get myself in readiness to go to Calcutta, for that though he had been unlucky in the war (which he asserted with great warmth, had not been of his seeking, nor had he been the aggressor, reproaching the English with want of fidelity, and breach of treaty), yet he said, he had still hopes of an accommodation; he asked me what I thought of it. I told him, I made no doubt of it. When some of his people, who were present, mentioned the affair of Mr. Amyatt's death; he declared that he had never given any orders for killing Mr. Amyatt; but, after receiving advice of Mr. Ellis's having attacked Patna, he had ordered all his servants to take and imprison all the English in the provinces, wherever they could find them; he likewise added, that if a treaty was not set afoot, he would bring the king, the Mahrattas, and Abdallees, against us, and so ruin our trade, &c. He had finished his letters, and ordered boats, and a guard to conduct me; when, upon the advice of some of his people, he stopped me, and said there was no occasion for me to go. After his sending for me at first, he ordered the sepoy, in

\* A Frenchman in Meer Cossim's service. His highness had engaged with the English to keep no French in his service.

† This gentleman had been one of the deputation from the council; his detention and murder was an act of barbarous perfidy; which classes the name of Meer Cossim with Suraj-ad-Dowlah, Meeran, and others of the most bloody and barbarous Mohammedan rulers in India.

whose charge I was, to go to their quarters; two moguls, and twelve hircarras to attend me, but to let me go about the city where I pleased. I then applied for liberty to stay at the Dutch factory, which was granted. I applied to Mehdee Allee Khan, for his interest in behalf of the gentlemen in the Chelston, who were seven in number, and were not killed till the 11th of October; but when he was petitioned about them, he gave no answer; but still sent orders to Shimroo, to cut them off. I likewise applied to Allee Ibrahim Cawn, who interceded for them; but he gave him no answer either, though I was present when Ibrahim Cawn petitioned for them. On the 14th of October, on the approach of our army, Cossim Allee decamped with his troops in great confusion, and marched as far as Fulwarree, five coss to the westward of the city. The hircarras that were with me, having no orders about me, I gave them some money, which made them pretty easy. On the 25th, after giving money to a jemautdar, that had the guard to the westward of the Dutch factory, by the river side, I set out in a small pulwar, and got safe to the boats, under command of Captain Wedderburn, that were lying opposite to the city, on the other side of the river, and at eleven o'clock that night arrived at the army, under the command of Major Adams, lying at Jonsy."

Of course nothing can be written in extenuation of this foul and wholesale murder, resembling so much the sanguinary horrors of Cawnpore, when, in 1857, the Nana Sahib committed a similar massacre; but the soubahdar had much to provoke revenge. His hoarded wrongs found an escape when the very persons who were the chief instruments in inflicting them were in his power. He well knew that through his enemy the Rajah Shita-

broy, Mr. Ellis, and Major Carnac, without the knowledge of the governor, had carried on secret correspondence with the emperor, and his vizier, with the object of the soubahdar's dethronement. For this purpose Ellis's complaints of fictitious grievances were made to the council; and temptations were created by him for the soubahdar, or his officers, to do some precipitate acts which would necessitate war. It is difficult not to believe that Ellis and others, his equals in rank, were bribed by the Nabob of Oude, to bring about, if possible, a rupture between the English and the soubahdar, that the latter might be committed to hostilities, and some members of the house of Delhi, or the vizier himself, be enabled, through the turmoil, to reach the musnid. He was, at all events, anxious for his own purposes, both to weaken the power of the English and keep the soubahdarree of Bengal disturbed. Mr. Ellis, and his confederates in intrigue, had known this well, but all considerations seemed to be lost sight of by them, except the accumulation of money by whatever means.

Patna was stormed on the 6th of November, and the war against Meer Cossim was prosecuted with renewed ardour. The British, under Major Adams, met with their usual success. In five months, after the formal commencement of hostilities, Meer Cossim was driven beyond the Caramnassa. The loss of the British in accomplishing this success was very small, except at the massacre at Patna. Several gallant officers, however, fell in different places, and the senior member of council, Mr. Amyatt, perished at Moorshedabad, as already related, with several other civilians of position. Meer Cossim, accompanied by the odious Shimroo, sought the protection of the Nabob of Oude.

## CHAPTER LXXVII.

WAR WITH THE NABOB OF OUDE—RUIN OF MEER COSSIM—DEATH OF MEER JAFFIER—THE ENGLISH PLACE NUJUM-AD-DOWLAH UPON THE MUSNID OF BENGAL—HUMILIATION OF NUNDCOOMAR, THE MINISTER OF JAFFIER—DISORGANIZATION OF ENGLISH AFFAIRS IN BENGAL—CORRUPT PRACTICES OF THE COUNCIL—APPOINTMENT OF CLIVE AS GOVERNOR—NEW SETTLEMENT OF AFFAIRS IN BENGAL.

MEER JAFFIER was now once more upon the musnid of the soubahdarree. It is important to review the terms upon which he was reinstated. Before he left Calcutta to join the army, upon which devolved the task of expelling his son-in-law, and exalting himself, considerable negotiations were necessary to induce him to comply with some of the

demands which had been previously made upon Meer Cossim. At heart the former approved the policy of the latter. Meer Jaffier regarded the conduct of the English throughout as unjust, and contrary to the treaty. After all his intrigues with the council, he betrayed no eagerness to reach the throne of which his relative was so soon to be deprived.

The council, pressed by the exigencies of the crisis, gave way to his demands, and a treaty was finally made. As this formed the basis of the relations of the English to the soubahdar of Bengal, so long as such an officer was permitted to exist, it will throw light upon the future proceedings of both parties on the part of the company.

We engage to reinstate the nabob Meer Mohammed Jaffier Cawn in the soubahdarree of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, by the deposit of Meer Mohammed Cossim Cawn; and the effects, treasure, jewels, &c., belonging to Meer Mohammed Cossim Cawn, which shall fall into our hands, shall be delivered up to the nabob afore-named.

*On the part of the Nabob.*

First, That the treaty which I formerly concluded with the company, upon my accession to the nizamat, engaging to regard the honour and reputation of the company, their governor, and council, as my own, granting perwannahs for the currency of the company's trade, the same treaty I now confirm and ratify.

Secondly, I do grant and confirm to the company, for defraying the expenses of their troops, the chucals of Burdwan, Midnapoor, and Chittagong, which were before ceded for the same purpose.

Thirdly, I do ratify and confirm to the English the privilege granted them by their firman, and several husbulhookums, of carrying on their trade by means of their own dustucks, free from all duties, taxes, and impositions, in all parts of the country, excepting the article of salt, on which a duty of two and a half per cent. is to be levied on the Rowana or Hoogly market price.

Fourthly, I give to the company half the saltpetre which is produced in the country of Voonnee, which their gomastahs shall send to Calcutta, the other half shall be collected by my fougedar, for the use of my offices; and I will suffer no other person to make purchases of this article in that country.

Fifthly, In the chucal of Silhet, for the space of five years, commencing with the Bengal year 1170, my fougedar, and the company's gomastah, shall jointly prepare chunam, of which each shall defray half the expenses; and half the chunam so made shall be given to the company, and the other half shall be for my use.

Sixthly, I will maintain twelve thousand horse and twelve thousand foot in the three provinces; and if there should be occasion for more, the number shall be increased proportionably to the emergency. Besides these, the force of the English company shall always attend me when they are wanted.

Seventhly, Wherever I shall fix my court, either at Moorshedabad or elsewhere, I will advise the governor and council; and whatever number of English forces I may have occasion for, in the management of my affairs, I will demand them, and they shall be allowed me; and an English gentleman shall reside with me, to transact all affairs between me and the company; and a person shall also reside on my part at Calcutta, to negotiate with the governor and council.

Eighthly, The late perwannah issued by Cossim Allee Cawn, granting to all merchants the exemption of all duties, for the space of two years, shall be reversed and called in, and the duties collected as before.

Ninthly, I will cause the rupees coined in Calcutta to pass in every respect equal to the siccas of Moorshedabad, without any deduction of batta; and whosoever shall demand batta shall be punished.

Tenthly, I will give thirty lacs of rupees to defray all the expenses and loss accruing to the company from the

war and stoppage of their investment; and I will reimburse to all private persons the amount of all such losses, proved before the governor and council, as they may sustain in their trade in the country; if I should not be able to discharge this in ready money, I will give assignments of land for the amount.

Eleventhly, I will confirm and renew the treaty which I formerly made with the Dutch.

Twelfthly, If the French come into the country, I will not allow them to erect any fortifications, maintain forces, or hold lands, zemindarrees, &c., but they shall pay tribute, and carry on their trade as in former times.

Thirteenthly, Some regulations shall be hereafter settled between us, for deciding all disputes which may arise between the English agents and gomastahs in the different parts of the country, and my officers.

In testimony whereof, we the said governor and council have set our hands, and affixed the seal of the company to one part hereof; and the nabob afore-named hath set his hand and seal to another part hereof; which were mutually done and interchanged at Fort William, the 10th day of July, 1764.

HENRY VANSITTART,	WARREN HASTINGS,
JOHN CARNAC,	RANDOLPH MARRIOT,
WILLIAM BILLERS,	HUGH WATTS.
JOHN CARTIER,	

*Demands made on the part of the Nabob Meer Jaffier, to the Governor and Council, at the time of signing the Treaty.*

First, I formerly acquainted the company with the particulars of my own affairs, and received from them repeated letters of encouragement with presents. I now make this request, that you will write in a proper manner to the company, and also to the King of England, the particulars of our friendship and union; and procure for me writings of encouragement, that my mind may be assured from that quarter, that no breach may ever happen between me and the English; and that every governor and councillor, and chief, who are here, or may hereafter come, may be well disposed and attached to me.

Secondly, Since all the English gentlemen, assured of my friendly disposition to the company, confirm me in the nizamat; I request, that to whatever I may at any time write, they will give their credit and assent, nor regard the stories of designing men to my prejudice, that all my affairs may go on with success, and no occasion may arise for jealousy or ill-will between us.

Thirdly, Let no protection be given, by any of the English gentlemen, to any of my dependents who may fly for shelter to Calcutta, or other of your districts; but let them be delivered up to me on demand. I shall strictly enjoin all my fougedars and aumils, on all accounts to afford assistance and countenance to such of the gomastahs of the company as attend to the lawful trade of their factories; and if any of the said gomastahs shall act otherwise, let them be checked in such a manner as may be an example to others.

Fourthly, From the neighbourhood of Calcutta to Hoogly, and many of the pergunahs, bordering upon each other, it happens, that, on complaints being made, people go against the talookdars, reats, and tenants of my towns, to the prejudice of the business of the circar; wherefore, let strict orders be given, that no peons be sent from Calcutta on the complaint of any one, upon my talookdars or tenants; but on such occasions, let application be made to me, or the naib of the fougedarree of Hoogly, that the country may be subject to no loss or devastation. And if any of the merchants and traders which belonged to the bauxbunder and azingunge, and have settled in Calcutta, should be desirous of returning to Hoogly, and carrying on their business there as formerly, let no one molest them. Chandernagore, and the



French factory, was presented to me by Colonel Clive, and given by me in charge to Ameer Beg Cawn. For this reason, let strict orders be given, that no English gentlemen exercise any authority therein, but that it remain as formerly, under the jurisdiction of my people.

Fifthly, Whenever I may demand any forces from the governor and council for my assistance, let them be immediately sent to me, and no demand made on me for their expenses.

The demands of the nabob Shujaool Moolk Hissam, o Dowla Meer Mohammed Jaffier Cawn Behader Mohabut Jung, written in five articles. We the president and council of the English company do agree, and set our hands to, in Fort William, the 10th of July, 1763.

\* Signed, &c.

Mr. Vansittart, as governor, carried out the policy of the committee. That policy, although successful, brought several members of their own body to a miserable end, and involved their chief partizans in similar destruction. Mr. Vansittart resolved to leave Bengal, but was detained by the dangerous intrigues of Meer Cossim beyond its borders, and the desire of the council that he should remain until the province was settled down in orderly government and external peace. When Meer Cossim crossed the Caramnassa, the emperor and his vizier were encamped near Allahabad. Thither the expelled viceroy repaired, and was ostentatiously received. He importuned his majesty to make war upon the English, but the vizier did not immediately act upon such counsel. He then begged the vizier himself, as Nabob of Oude, to make a grand effort for the expulsion of the English. His highness excused himself on the ground of disturbances in Bundelcund. Meer Cossim adroitly offered to put them down. His offer was accepted, and he was more fortunate than in his war with the English. So pleased was the nabob with the courage and energy of the exiled prince, that he agreed to march upon Bahar, and endeavour to deprive the English of that province. Meanwhile, the emperor and vizier pretended to the English that Meer Cossim should be formally stripped of his power by an imperial decree, and his person surrendered to the governor of Bengal. The English, doubtful of the good faith of the native princes, marched troops to the banks of the Caramnassa. Several complications arose of a serious nature to frustrate their military plans. Major Adams resigned his command, and soon after died. Major (late Captain) Knox was compelled also to resign by ill health. Major Carnac at last was placed in charge of the army. The sepoy, who had for some time shown a mutinous spirit on occasions when their grievances were imaginary, or if real, before there was time for their investigation and redress, deserted in

\* Majors Adams and Carnac absent.

great numbers to the enemy, and had the cause of the Nabob of Oude more at heart than those whose salt they eat. Open disobedience of orders was common on the part of those who did not desert. This caused extreme trepidation at Calcutta, and means were taken to soothe the irritation of the hireling soldiery. There were, however, a number of French deserters in the English pay, and these fomented the disturbance, so as almost to destroy the British sepoy contingent. It was found that Meer Jaffier was as much disinclined to go to war for English purposes as Meer Cossim himself could have been, and was in fact a less manageable instrument against foreign aggression. Major Carnac was ordered by the council to cross the Caramnassa and attack the enemy; but with his disaffected French and sepoys, he could not pursue a bold policy, and therefore acted only upon the defensive, which tended to dishearten such of the sepoys as remained obedient, who had been accustomed to see the English strike boldly for power. At length Carnac retreated to Patna. The enemy followed, and on the 13th of May, 1764, attacked the British. A long conflict ensued, and at the close of day the enemy was repulsed. The emperor offered to negotiate on the basis of Meer Jaffier's surrender of Bahar. The English not only refused, but demanded that Meer Cossim should be given up, the French (or Swiss as he was supposed by some to be) murderer Shimroo, and the sepoy deserters. Nothing came of these mutual demands. Major Carnac menacing the enemy's flank, he precipitately retired into Oude.

The council at Calcutta, mischievous and incompetent as ever, censured Major Carnac because he did not lead the army, which had fought so well on the 13th of May, into the enemy's territory. That experienced commander declared that only by expedients and extraordinary vigilance could disaffection in his ranks be subdued, and had he led his army into Oude it would have disbanded. The fact was, the Mohammedan sepoys regarded both the Emperor and Nabob of Oude with a religious reverence, which made them unwilling to fight against them; yet, on the day of battle, the *esprit de corps* common to soldiers kept them in action until victory was obtained: many who fought well deserted after. Major Carnac was unjustly and unwisely superseded, and the command given to Major Munro. Happily this officer was competent to the duty imposed upon him, but it might have been otherwise, and the injustice to Major Carnac, like other acts of the council, might have been followed by a speedy retribution. Major Munro found the whole of the

native force at Patna mutinous. The major adopted the policy of his predecessor, by first endeavouring to subdue the mutinous state of his own forces before attacking those of the enemy. The day he assumed the command, a battalion of sepoys with their arms and accoutrements set out to join the enemy. One hundred Europeans, a company of sepoys, whose officers reported them trustworthy, and two field-pieces were sent in pursuit of the deserters. They were overtaken by night while asleep, and not having placed sentinels, were surprised, disarmed, and taken prisoners. Fifty were selected for execution, and were blown away from guns. This deprives them of caste, and is regarded as a most severe punishment. The native troops in garrison refused to allow more than four of the men to be executed, but Munro loaded his guns with grape, drew up his Europeans in the intervals between his ordnance, and commanded the sepoys to ground their arms; the whole party originally sentenced were executed, and the mutiny was completely quelled. Thus early in the history of our occupation of India was mutiny displayed, and thus early was it shown by a man of vigour how to suppress it.

On the 15th of September, active operations commenced. The enemy disputed the passage of the Soam, but were dispersed in a masterly manner by Major Champion, an officer acting under Munro. At Buxar, Major Munro came up with the enemy in full force. A grand battle was fought, and a glorious victory obtained by the British. As the enemy retreated, a small river, the passage of which was covered by a bridge of boats, lay in the line of march. Before the rear of his army had crossed, the vizier destroyed the bridge and sacrificed two thousand of his men. Munro's opinion of this act was afterwards given in the following terms:—

"The best piece of generalship Sujah-ad-Dowlah showed that day; because, if I had crossed the rivulet with the army, I would either have taken or drowned his whole army in the Caramnassa, and come up with his treasure and jewels and Cossim Ali Khan's jewels, which, I was informed, amounted to between two and three millions."\* Besides those lost in the river, the battle of Buxar cost the imperial army two thousand men left dead upon the field of battle, many wounded prisoners, and one hundred and thirty-three pieces of cannon. The strength of the army was variously estimated from forty to sixty thousand men. The British numbered 7772 men, of whom more than eight hundred were placed *hors de combat*. The English acted with compassion to the wounded. On the

day after the battle, the major received a letter from the emperor congratulating him on his victory, declaring that the vizier held him in constraint, and imploring the major to lend him his assistance. Great was the astonishment of the British commander at the receipt of such a communication. Munro marched towards Benares; the emperor marched in the same direction. He found means to communicate with the English commander, offering to depose the Nabob of Oude and confer his territory upon the English, if the latter would only assist him against the nabob, who, as his vizier, had the real direction of affairs. He craved an interview. The major received from Calcutta directions favourable to the emperor, and avoided any molestation of his own personal guards. Meer Cossim was also anxious to escape the vizier, who demanded payment of subsidy, and also the emperor's tribute, neither of which the ex-soubahdar could pay. To convince his inexorable persecutor of this, he laid by his state and assumed the garb and mode of life of a Mohammedan devotee. As this was a reflection upon the hospitality of a Mohammedan prince, the vizier besought Meer Cossim to re-assume his princely style. Meanwhile, the troops which had followed the fortunes of the latter became clamorous for pay, and his highness parted with his hoarded gold for the purpose, but resolved to get rid of an army which could be of no use to him. Shimroo, the French or Swiss mercenary, who had been the executioner at the massacre at Patna, headed the rioters. This general and the troops went over to the vizier, taking their arms and artillery with them. Thornton represents this transfer as having taken place before the battle of Buxar; other writers describe it as one of the consequences of that battle.

The vizier deliberately plundered the unfortunate Cossim of all his valuables, except some jewels which he secreted, and sent by a trusty servant into the Rohilla country. Thus one Mohammedan prince was ever ready to rob and oppress another, while perpetually uniting in prayers and denunciations against the infidel. The vizier refused to fulfil his promise of giving up Meer Cossim to the English. When Major Munro reached Benares, an agent of the virtual governor of the Delhi empire waited upon the English officer, and opened fresh negotiations. He refused, in his employer's name, to deliver up Meer Cossim, Shimroo, or any of the fugitives, but offered to make peace and indemnify the English for the losses they had sustained, and for the expenses of the war. Munro refused. Subsequently, the vizier offered to

\* *Evidence of Major Munro, First Report.*

connive at Meer Cossim's escape from his own custody, in such a way as that the English might make sure of catching him. He also offered to have Shimroo assassinated at an entertainment; but would not surrender him, it being contrary to the Koran. His excellency had no objection to a foul and sanguinary act of treachery, provided it was not brought under any especial prohibition of Mohammedan casuistry — exemplifying the way in which Mohammedanism hardened the heart, and prepared the hands for murder, while it made hypocrites and fanatics of its professors.

It was found impossible to make terms, and active hostilities were again renewed. The English laid unsuccessful siege to Chunnughur; but no battle of consequence occurred, and Major Munro resigned his command, and quitted India. Meanwhile, the occupation of the musnid of Bengal by Meer Jaffier was not productive of satisfaction to those who placed him there. He sent to Calcutta complaints, similar to those with which Meer Cossim had tormented the council; and the same sort of contests between the officers of the soubahdar and of the company continued. Meer Jaffier protested that it was impossible to govern Bengal while the English asserted rights and privileges subversive of all native government. The disputes with his highness were terminated by his death, which took place in February, 1765.

There were two competitors for the vacant government; the second son of the deceased prince, named Nujum-ad-Dowlah, and the infant son of the deceased Meeran. The English recognised Nujum-ad-Dowlah, although they had very little confidence in either his integrity or ability. They therefore took measures to insure their power, and, if possible, secure peace, in connection with the accession of the new sovereign. One of their methods for accomplishing these objects, was to take upon them the defence of the three provinces, on condition of the new soubahdar paying five lacs of rupees per mensem for the support of the army thus employed. Meer Jaffier had done this for several months previous to his death; but the English desired to have a public sanction connected with its future performance. The next care was to obtain proper persons for the management of the chief offices of state. This created difficulty. Meer Jaffier had been singularly attached to a man named Nundcoomar, a most treacherous enemy to the English. To him, well knowing that fact, Meer Jaffier had confided the chief management of his affairs. Mr. Van-

sittart opposed the elevation of this man by Meer Jaffier, but the latter made it a *sine quâ non* to his own acceptance of power, at a moment when the English were glad to obtain some influential prince to set up in opposition to Meer Cossim. The governor and council deemed it expedient to yield; but the governor's misgivings were powerful as to the probable result.

The remarks of Mr. Vansittart, when he reluctantly gave his consent to the exaltation of Nundcoomar, were as follow:—"As to Nundcoomar, he had hitherto made himself remarkable for nothing but a seditious and treacherous disposition, which had led him to perpetrate the most atrocious acts against our government, having been detected and convicted by the voice of the whole board, in encouraging and assisting our enemies in their designs against Bengal; taking the opportunity of the indulgence granted him, of living in Calcutta, under the company's protection, to make himself the channel for carrying on a correspondence between the Governor of Pondicherry, and the shah-zada, then at war with us. During the soubahdarship of Jaffier Allee Cawn, he had distinguished himself by fomenting quarrels between him and the presidency. After the promotion of Cossim Allee Cawn, he became as active, but with greater success, in inventing plots, and raising jealousies against him. This gave him an ascendancy over some of the members of the board, and made him a party object; by which, and an unparalleled perseverance, he was enabled to set the whole community in a flame. Such was the man whom the nabob chose for the administration of his affairs, and whose exaltation to this rank, he made a condition of his acceptance of the soubahdarship."

It was doubtless because Nundcoomar was likely to work skilfully in undermining the English that he was such a favourite with Meer Jaffier, who, at heart, hated them, and desired to have appropriate instruments at hand should opportunity for their expulsion ever arise.

During the second government of Meer Jaffier various circumstances occurred to increase the suspicions which the English entertained of his chief advice, and they resolved that this man should not stand near the throne of Nujum-ad-Dowlah. They accordingly selected Mahomed Reza Khan for the post of chief minister to the new soubahdar. Nundcoomar's talents for intrigue were immediately set to work. He, unknown to the English, opened communications with the court of Delhi, and obtained thence a sumnid for the new soubahdar, before the English had com-

pleted their arrangements; thus making it appear that his highness ascended the throne not by English power or influence, but through the grace of the emperor; this was a means in the eyes of the multitude of depriving the English of the prestige they were so ambitious to maintain. After various skilful and successful manœuvres, this gifted but vicious man was unable to do more than thwart somewhat the designs of the English, who ultimately carried all their arrangements into effect. The council succeeded in gaining considerable power in the appointment of revenue officers, and thus hoped to guard against the quarrels, which during successive reigns had disturbed the peace of Bengal. Concerning these arrangements and others into which the English afterwards entered, a distinguished historian\* of British empire in India thus writes:—"All these arrangements may fairly be supposed to have had their origin in an honest zeal for the benefit of the company by whose servants they were made, and of the country to which they belonged. The same favourable view cannot be taken of their conduct in another instance. They renewed with Nujum-ad-Dowlah the agreement contained in the last treaty made with his father for continuing to the English the privilege of carrying on the inland trade free from duties, excepting the two and a half per cent. paid on salt. Not only was this unreasonable and unjust in itself, but it was in direct contravention of positive orders from the company at home. The court of directors, by letters dated 8th February, 1764, had required the inland trade to be discontinued. The court of proprietors shortly afterwards, recommended a reconsideration of the subject, with a view to its regulation in such a manner as should 'prevent all further disputes between the soubahdar and the company.' The court of directors accordingly, in a letter dated 1st June, 1704, desired the council of Fort William to form, with the approbation of the nabob—in the language of the despatch, 'with his free will and consent, and in such a manner as not to afford any just grounds of complaint'—a proper and equitable plan for carrying on the private trade: but it is to be remarked, in giving these directions, the court took occasion to express their disapprobation of those articles in the treaty with Meer Jaffier which provided for the immunity of the company's servants from custom duties except on salt, while the general exemption granted by Meer Cossim was to be reversed. The court write, 'these are terms which appear to be so very injurious to the nabob

and to the natives, that they cannot, in the very nature of them, tend to anything but the producing general heart-burnings and disaffection; and consequently there can be little reason to expect the tranquillity in the country can be permanent: the orders therefore in our said letter of the 8th of February'—the orders directing the entire abandonment of the inland trade—are to remain in force, until a more equitable and satisfactory plan can be formed and adopted.' In the face of these orders, the council of Calcutta inserted in their treaty with Nujum-ad-Dowlah, an article reserving to the servants of the company the privilege of continuing to trade upon the same terms as had been granted by Meer Jaffier—terms which the directors declared injurious to both prince and people, and incompatible with the tranquillity of the country. Well might the authority whose orders were thus set at nought, address those by whom the new treaty was framed and concluded, in language of severe and indignant reproof. In expressing their opinion upon the treaty, the court, after advert- ing to this article and to their previous orders, say, 'we must and do consider what you have done as an express breach and violation of our orders, and as a determined resolution to sacrifice the interests of the company and the peace of the country to lucrative and selfish views. This unaccountable behaviour puts an end to all confidence in those who made this treaty.'\*

"While the private trade was thus secured for the benefit of the company's servants in general, those who had been instrumental in placing the new nabob on the throne had the usual opportunities of promoting their own special interests. Presents of large amount were tendered, and though for a time the members of council displayed a decent coyness, they were not unrelenting: as usual on such occasions, their scruples gave way before the arguments of their tempters. The nabob dispensed his wealth with a liberality becoming his rank. The gratitude of Mahomed Reza Khan was manifested by the earnestness with which he pressed a participation in his good fortune upon those who had bestowed it on him; and Juggut Seit,† anxious for the support of the British council in aiding his influence with the nabob, was ready, in the spirit of commercial speculation, to purchase it. Mr. Vansittart had retired from the government before the death of Meer Jaffier, and the chair was occupied by Mr. Spencer,

\* *Letter to Bengal*, 19th of February, 1766.

† A banker, relative of the two unfortunate persons murdered by Meer Cossim, and successor to their vast trade and wealth.

\* Edward Thornton, Esq. *British Empire in India*, vol. i. chap. vi. p. 470, &c.

a gentleman who, most opportunely for himself, had been brought from Bombay just in time to improve his fortune to the extent of two lacs of rupees."

The members of council obtained large sums by these nefarious transactions. While these things occurred in Bengal, the war with the vizier, as Nabob of Oude, was still waged to the advantage of English arms. The unprincipled members of the council having obtained such treasures by the accession of the new soubahdar, and feeling themselves secure against anything the deposed soubahdar could do, offered to make peace with the Nabob of Oude, if he would, *as an act of justice*, execute Meer Cossim and Shimroo. This proposal shocked all who heard of it, except those most concerned in the infamy. The court of directors in London were aware of the proper conduct of Major Munro in refusing to be a party to any treacherous act on the part of the nabob towards these culprits, and had approved of his principles and policy. When they heard of this proposal coming from the council, they believed, or affected to believe, that the council could not have been in earnest, and observed, in reply, "If the law of hospitality forbid his delivering them up, surely it forbid his murdering them."\*

Nothing seems to have come of this vile project, so worthy of the men who then ruled Bengal. The war went on. Chumnugur, which had so long resisted the English, surrendered in February. Allahabad fell before their arms the same month. The emperor, who professed to desire the success of the British, took up his residence in that imperial city. The Nabob of Oude fled to his capital, but after a short time abandoned Lucknow, and sought refuge in Rohilcund. Meer Cossim made his escape, and went in quest of his jewels. Shimroo abandoned the vizier when his cause was no longer prosperous, nor his service profitable. The ultimate fate of the nabob trembled in the balance; but the incompetent and unsteady council knew not what course to take, and were so occupied with their usual occupations of plunder and oppression within the limits of Bengal, as to have little leisure for great questions beyond its confines, which only affected the company in whose employment they were, the poor people of the country which they oppressed, or the honour of their own country, which they never consulted.

Bengal was nearly ruined. Repeated revolutions had unsettled the minds of men. Trade and industry fled affrighted from such a realm of conflict. The council, and the native rulers,

\* *Letter to Bengal, 19th of February, 1760.*

together, had, by their unprincipled ambition, turned it into a vast Aceldama. The directors in London knew all this, and sought and found a remedy. Lord Macaulay thus depicts the state of affairs at this juncture:—"A great and sudden turn in affairs was at hand. Every ship from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings; the internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a point that it could go no further. What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants, exposed to temptation such as that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, and ill-informed company, situated at such a distance, that the average interval of sending a dispatch, and the receipt of an answer, was above a year and a half? Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul, who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators, and flocks of camel-leopards,—the Spanish viceroy, who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico, or Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter horses, trapped and shod with silver, were now undone. Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to grow rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another nabob named Meer Cossim. But Meer Cossim had parts, and a will; and though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit; nay, which destroyed his revenue in the very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the Nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together in the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign, and could unmake him. The servants of the company obtained, not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly of

almost the whole of the internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities, of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependents who ranged through the province spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master; and his master was armed with all the power of the company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the company thicker than the loins of Suraj-ad-Dowlah. Under their old masters they had, at least, one resource—when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization. It resembled the government of evil genii, rather than the government of human tyrants. Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of English breed, the hereditary nobility of mankind, whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man as their fathers had been used to do from the Mahratta; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages, which the report of his approach had made desolate. The foreign lords of Bengal were naturally objects of hatred to all the neighbouring powers, and to all the haughty race presented a dauntless front. The English armies, everywhere outnumbered, were everywhere victorious. A succession of commanders formed in the school of Clive, still maintained the fame of our country. It was impossible, however, that even the military establishments of the country should long continue exempt from the vices which prevailed in every other part of the government. Rapacity, luxury, and the spirit of insubordination, spread from the civil service to the officers of the army. The evil continued to grow till every mess-room became the seat of conspiracy and cabal, and till the sepoys could be kept in order only by wholesale executions. At length the state of things in Bengal began to excite uneasiness at home. The general cry was that Clive, and Clive alone, could save the empire which he had founded."

As the result of the public feeling so strongly expressed at home, Clive was appointed "governor and commander-in-chief of the British possessions in Bengal," and he set sail the third time for India, arriving at Calcutta in May, 1765. Scarcely had he reached the seat of his new government when he vigorously set about the reform of abuses. He met the council, and expressed his determination to carry out a thorough and searching reform. A vague expectation existed among them that he would fall in with their views, yet rumours had reached them that Clive came out for the specific purpose of putting down their delinquencies. Johnstone, who was as bold as he was hypocritical and venal, "bearded the lion;" but while proceeding with his oration, Clive suddenly stopped him, and inquired, with his characteristic hauteur and decision, if the council intended to question the power of the new government. The orator murmured apologies, and the awed and baffled conclave of robbers, which were then dignified by the name of the council of Bengal, remained silent and submissive, each member alarmed as to the consequences which might ensue to himself if Clive were resisted, or his opinion disputed.

The reader will probably inquire where, during the period of the serious transactions from the restoration of Meer Jaffier to the arrival of Clive as governor, was Warren Hastings?—he who so eloquently and pertinaciously asserted the true interests of the company, as compatible with the honour of England and the rights of the Bengalee. His manly protests, and the restraint of his influence, were renewed in 1764, when, as stated before, he returned to England, where he resided during the whole of the transactions which had occurred. His representations in England had great weight with the company in showing them the true state of matters in Bengal, and the importance of a new and vigorous government of that presidency. Other and important events were destined to transpire before Warren Hastings trod again the soil of India, and took up his abode once more in the city of palaces.

Clive, having been made an Irish peer while in England, entered upon his duties as governor and commander-in-chief in Bengal with increased dignity, his new rank greatly promoting his influence both among his countrymen and the natives. He had also the advantage of being assisted by a body of men called the select committee. The person among them upon whom he had most reliance was General Carnac, the same who, as Major Carnac, had distinguished himself so well in Indian warfare. The council regarded the

select committee with great jealousy, but Clive overbore insubordination and held on his course.

The first subject of reform was the private trade, which he put down. Soon after, a complaint from the new nabob against his chief minister, that the latter had utterly exhausted the treasury to bribe or satisfy the demands of the council, led to an investigation which was marked by many stormy scenes, and issued in an exposure of the corruption of the council greater than had ever been alleged against them, or could have been supposed. The total disobedience of the company's orders were proved by these investigations to have been as flagrant as the corruption which prompted it.

Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, having formed an alliance with Mulhar, a Mahratta chief, made preparations for renewed hostilities against Bengal. Brigadier-general Carnac made such arrangements as prevented the junction of the allied forces, and by this means defeated the scheme of the alliance. The general fell upon a division of the Mahratta army unexpectedly, and cut it to pieces. Intimidated by the boldness and energy of the exploit, the whole Mahratta force retired towards the Jumna, whither Carnac proceeded, attacked, and routed them. The Nabob of Oude losing all hope of contending successfully with the English, threw himself upon their generosity. He came over for that purpose to the camp of Carnac.

Lord Clive quitted Calcutta on the 24th of June, 1765, and proceeded to the north-west, in order to negotiate in person with the nabob and with the emperor. On the 16th of August, at Allahabad, a treaty was signed.\* This was the beginning of a connection with Oude, which, to the present day, has been fruitful of trouble to the English. This connection was forced upon the English by the aggressive policy of Sujah-ad-Dowlah. The English then acted in the case of Oude with moderation, and since then greater forbearance has been shown to it than to any of the tributary native states of India, so long as it remained in that category. The nabob resisted the insertion of any clause in the treaty for the introduction of "factories" in his dominions, but a stipulation for a right to trade was, nevertheless, insisted upon. The emperor confirmed by treaty all previous privileges possessed by the English, granted the company a reversionary interest in Lord Clive's jaghire, and conferred upon it also the dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. The company henceforth held the provinces on a footing superior to their previous occupancy. The com-

pany became in fact the soubahdar, while they still upheld one nominally invested with the office. Previously, the power of the English was greater than that of the soubahdars, but the latter still held great authority, and a direct command over the resources of the country, financial and military; henceforth all real power rested with the English. The opinions of the select committee on this subject were thus expressed in a letter to the court of directors:—"The perpetual struggles for superiority between the nabobs and your agents, together with the recent proofs before us of notorious and avowed corruption, have rendered us unanimously of opinion, after the most mature deliberation, that no other method could be suggested of laying the axe to the root of all these evils, than that of obtaining the dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa for the company. By establishing the power of the Great Mogul, we have likewise established his rights; and his majesty, from principles of gratitude, equity, and policy, has thought proper to bestow this important employment on the company, the nature of which is, the collecting of all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the nizamat, to remit the remainder to Delhi, or wherever the king shall reside or direct."

The directors adopted the views of the select committee, and conveyed their approval, with instructions for future policy, in the following terms:—

"We come now to consider the great and important affair of the dewanee. When we consider that the barrier of the country government was entirely broke down, and every Englishman throughout the country armed with an authority that owned no superior, and exercising his power to the oppression of the helpless native, who knew not whom to obey, at such a crisis, we cannot hesitate to approve your obtaining the dewanee for the company.

"We must now turn our attention to render our acquisitions as permanent as human wisdom can make them. This permanency, we apprehend, can be found only in the simplicity of the execution. We observe the account you give of the office and power of the king's dewan in former times was—the collecting of all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the nizamat, to remit the remainder to Delhi. This description of it is not the office we wish to execute; the experience we have already had, in the province of Burdwan,

\* *Vide Printed Treaties.*

\* *Letter to Bengal, 17th of May, 1766.*

convinces us how unfit an Englishman is to conduct the collection of the revenues, and follow the subtle native through all his arts to conceal the real value of his country, to perplex and to elude the payments. We therefore entirely approve of your preserving the ancient form of government, in the upholding the dignity of the soubahdar.

"We conceive the office of dewan should be exercised only in superintending the collection and disposal of the revenues, which office, though vested in the company, should officially be executed by our resident at the durbar, under the control of the governor and select committee, the ordinary bounds of which control should extend to nothing beyond the superintending the collection of the revenues and the receiving the money from the nabob's treasury to that of the dewannah, or the company.

"The resident at the durbar, being constantly on the spot, cannot be long a stranger to any abuses in the government, and is always armed with power to remedy them. It will be his duty to stand between the administration and the encroachments always to be apprehended from the agents of the company's servants, which must first be known to him; and we rely on his fidelity to the company to check all such encroachments, and to prevent the oppression of the natives. We would have his correspondence to be carried on with the select committee through the channel of the president. He should keep a diary of all his transactions. His correspondence with the natives must be publicly conducted; copies of all his letters sent and received be transmitted monthly to the presidency, with duplicates and triplicates, to be transmitted home, in our general packet, by every ship."

Mr. Auber observes upon the last paragraph:—"This was the introduction of the system of recorded check, which has since prevailed in conducting the home administration of the India government."

Reformations were as much required in the military as in the civil affairs of the presidency. In attempting to carry out these, Lord Clive met with a more formidable opposition than ever from the council. At the instigation of a general officer, Sir Robert Fletcher, all the officers of the company's army conspired to resign their commissions on a single day; so that by depriving the army of officers, the governor would be compelled to submit to their terms. By amazing vigour, ability, and resolution, Clive put down this mutiny without bloodshed. General Fletcher, and some of the chief delinquents, were cashiered; and the rest were

pardoned, on profession of repentance, and permitted to return to their duty.

While Clive was reducing the army to discipline, an opportunity was afforded to him of showing his zeal for their welfare. A large legacy was left to him by Meer Jaffier, consisting of five lacs of rupees. Clive made over this sum to the company, for the formation of a military fund for invalided officers and soldiers, and their widows. The company accepted the trusteeship, and passed resolutions complimenting his lordship's generosity. This act has been censured, as contrary to the covenants insisted upon by the company with their servants, after the government of Mr. Vansittart, that no presents were to be received from the native governments by any of the company's officers. The directors having been assured by their legal advisers that the legacy would be received by Clive without violating the covenants, they passed resolutions of approval of his lordship's conduct. Clive displayed all his former activity during his government. He visited the upper parts of Bengal personally, investigating all the company's affairs.

The health of his lordship began to suffer from his exposure to the climate, and this made him desirous to return. Another motive for that wish he confessed to be, that having a numerous family, he desired to superintend the education and conduct of his children. His great wealth, which he desired to enjoy in England, was probably as influential as any other cause of his desire to return home. The company sent an express overland, by way of Bussorah, to induce him to remain another season. He reluctantly consented, and devoted his vast energies to the great work of consolidating the power of the company.

During Lord Clive's stay in Bahar, while investigating the company's affairs there, a congress was held at Chupra. His lordship, General Carnac, Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the emperor's chief minister, and some Jaut and Rohilla chiefs, assembled there. A treaty, for mutual security against the Mahrattas, was there formed, in case those marauders should invade the dominions of any of the states united in the alliance. Deputies from the Mahratta chiefs also attended at Chupra, who made ardent protestations of peace, and proved that what had been construed into hostile demonstrations was the work of the emperor himself, who had foolishly engaged them to escort him to Delhi.

In May, 1766, the soubahdar died. It was well that the native government had been recently placed on a new footing, as already



described, for otherwise the death of the soubahdar would have caused new intrigues and disturbances. Clive concerted with the governments of Bombay and Madras such operations against the Mahrattas, as would in case of fresh invasions from them effectually check their power. Clive's health now seriously gave way, and his anxiety to return home greatly increased. He, however, believed that the object for which he had returned to Bengal had been accomplished, and that the consequences of his departure, apprehended by the company would in all probability not occur.

The private trade, which Lord Clive had apparently suppressed, was soon after renewed, and it is scarcely to his honour that he became participator in it, realizing large profits, which he divided among his relations and friends. He justified himself on the ground that he personally received no benefit; but if it enabled him to provide for his brother-in-law and other adherents, even to his valet, the excuse is not valid.

He quitted Bengal on the 29th of January, 1767. The career of Clive as a soldier was now ended. Even as a statesman he had already numbered his days; for although in England he took a large part in parliamentary and India-house concerns, and was put upon his defence by bitter and powerful enemies, so as to compel him to be very active in public life, he never again saw India, and could only influence affairs there by his opinion, given to the directors or to the public. Probably the best estimate of his character as a soldier and statesman, and of his general services in India, ever made, was that expressed by Mr. Thornton in the following passages of his Indian history:—"The reader who looks back upon the scenes through which he has been conducted, will at once perceive that it is on his military character that Clive's reputation must rest. All the qualities of a soldier were combined in him, and each so admirably proportioned to the rest, that none predominated to the

detriment of any other. His personal courage enabled him to acquire a degree of influence over his troops which has rarely been equalled, and which in India was before his time unknown; and this, united with the cool and consummate judgment by which his daring energy was controlled and regulated, enabled him to effect conquests which, if they had taken place in remote times, would be regarded as incredible. Out of materials the most unpromising he had to create the instruments for effecting these conquests, and he achieved his object where all men but himself might have despaired. No one can dwell upon the more exciting portions of his history without catching some portion of the ardour which led him through these stirring scenes; no one who loves the country for which he fought can recall them to memory without mentally breathing honour to the name of Clive. In India his fame is even greater than at home, and that fame is not his merely, it is his country's.

"As a statesman, Clive's vision was clear, but not extensive. He could promptly and adroitly adapt his policy to the state of things which he found existing; but none of his acts display any extraordinary political sagacity. Turning from his claims in a field where his talents command but a moderate degree of respect, and where the means by which he sometimes sought to serve the state and sometimes to promote his own interests give rise to a very different feeling, it is due to one to whom his country is so deeply indebted, to close the narrative of his career by recurring once more to that part of his character which may be contemplated with unmixed satisfaction. As a soldier he was pre-eminently great. With the name of Clive commences the flood of glory which has rolled on till it has covered the wide face of India with memorials of British valour. By Clive was formed the base of the column which a succession of heroes, well worthy to follow in his steps, have carried upward to a towering height, and surrounded with trophies of honour, rich, brilliant, and countless."

## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

AFFAIRS IN BENGAL DURING THE GOVERNMENT OF MR. VERELST AND MR. CARTIER—  
ARRIVAL OF WARREN HASTINGS AS GOVERNOR.

CLIVE's last act before his departure from Bengal was to continue the select committee, the company having empowered him either to abolish or continue it as he deemed the wiser course. He nominated Mr. Verelst to succeed him as governor, assisted by Mr. Cartier, Colonel Smith, Mr. Sykes, and Mr. Beecher. On the 17th of February, 1767, Mr. Verelst took the oath as governor. Scarcely had Clive departed when matters again fell into the former train of corruption and insubordination. Mr. Mill gives the following picture of the condition of the province:—"For the benefit of certain false pretexts which imposed upon nobody, the government of the country, as far as regarded the protection of the people, was dissolved. Neither the nabob nor his officers dared to exert any authority against the English, or whatsoever injustice and oppression they might be guilty. The gomastahs, or Indian agents employed by the company's servants, not only practised unbounded tyranny, but, overawing the nabob and his highest order, converted the tribunals of justice themselves into instruments of cruelty, making them inflict punishment upon the very wretches whom they oppressed, and whose only crime was their not submitting with sufficient willingness to the insolent rapacity of those subordinate tyrants. While the ancient administration of the country was rendered inefficient, this suspension of the powers of government was supplied by nothing in the regulations of the English. Beyond the ancient limits of the presidency, the company had no legal power over the natives: beyond these limits, the English themselves were not amenable to the British laws; and the company had no power of coercion except by sending persons out of the country; a remedy always inconvenient, and, except for very heinous offences, operating too severely upon the individual to be willingly applied. The natural consequence was, that the crimes of the English and their agents were in a great measure secured from punishment, and the unhappy natives lay prostrate at their feet. As the revenue of the government depended upon the productive operations of the people; and as a people are productive only in proportion to the share of their own produce which they are permitted to enjoy; this wretched administration could not fail, in

time, to make itself felt in the company's exchequer."\*

Mr. Verelst's administration, and that of Mr. Cartier, by whom he was followed, were chiefly occupied by internal arrangements, revenue, and trade.† The Mahrattas did not perpetrate their usual raids, and the weak soubahdar did not give himself up to political intrigue after the fashion of his predecessors.‡ This period of peace did not bring commercial prosperity to the company. Their servants invented new systems of cheating them, and of harassing the people. The company's servants still returned rich from Bengal after a few years' service, and the poverty of the province itself increased. The condition of the company's interests in Bengal was deplorable and disheartening.§ While, however, Bengal was at peace within its own borders, there were causes at work beyond its limits, to engage the presidency in the work of war. The "Goorkhas" had invaded the territory of the Rajah of Nepal, who was friendly, and between whose people and the subjects of the soubahdar and the English there was trade. He claimed the assistance of the soubahdar, and the English united with his highness in affording it. The council and the select committee had the usual assumption of those bodies, and the weakness and incompetency for warlike undertakings which had hitherto characterised the former body. Their plans were expensive, yet inadequate; rash, yet not bold; time-serving, but neither cautious nor prudent. The expedition against the Goorkhas was abortive.

Hyder Ali, of whom the reader will be informed in another chapter, became formidable at this time, and carried war and desolation

\* Governor Verelst, in his letter to the directors, immediately before his resignation, dated 16th of December, 1769, says: "We insensibly broke down the barrier between us and government, and the native grew uncertain where his obedience was due. Such a divided and complicated authority gave rise to oppressions and intrigues, unknown at any other period; the officers of the government caught the infection, and, being removed from any immediate control, proceeded with still greater audacity. In the meantime, we were repeatedly and peremptorily forbid to avow any public authority over the officers of government in our own names," &c.

† *English Government in Bengal*. By Harry Verelst, London, 1772. *Thoughts on our Acquisitions in Bengal*, London, 1771.

‡ *Stewart's History of Bengal*, 1818.

§ *History of the East India Company*, London, 1793.

into the Carnatic. The Madras government applied for aid to Bengal. The urgency of the case was greater than the invasion of Nepaul by the Goorkhas, and assistance was sent to such an extent as to tie the hands of the Bengal council from aggressive proceedings elsewhere. The council was more troubled from the scarcity of money than from any other means. This they attributed to the Chinese investments, which were generally made from the Bengal revenues. Mr. Mill accounts for it by the large sums drained from the country in various ways by the company's servants. These they, to a great extent, sent home through the Dutch and French Companies.\*

On the 23rd of October, 1768, the deficiency reached 663,055 rupees. The correspondence between Fort William and Fort St. George at this period presents a pitiable picture of bad financiers, incapable administrators, and traders ignorant of commercial philosophy. Mr. Mill attributes the poverty of the English exchequer in Bengal mainly to the absorption of their revenues in the expenses of governing their newly acquired territory. Professor Wilson denies this in the following terms:—"This is not warranted by the facts: a slight examination of the general accounts of receipts and disbursements exhibited in the accounts of the Bengal presidency published by the select committee shows, that the financial difficulties experienced there arose not from the political, but the commercial transactions of the company. From 1761 to 1772 there was a surplus on the territorial account of about £5,475,000 (the smaller figures are purposely omitted). The whole produce of the import cargoes was £1,437,000, the cost value of the goods remitted to England, £5,291,000, of which, therefore, £3,854,000 had been provided out of the revenue. Besides this, large remittances for commercial purposes had been made to other settlements, and to China, exceeding those received by £2,358,000, and consequently, exceeding the whole territorial receipt by £737,000. It is not matter of surprise, therefore, that the territorial treasury was embarrassed, nor is it to be wondered at that the resources of the country were in progress of diminution; the constant abstraction of capital, whether in bullion or goods, could not fail in time to impoverish any country however rich, and was very soon felt in India, in which no accumulation of capital had ever taken place, from the unsettled state of the government, and the insecurity of property, and the constant tendency of the population to press upon the means of subsistence."

\* Mill, book iv. chap. vii.

On the 24th of December, 1769, Mr. Verelst left the three provinces in perfect peace, and with a less amount of jealousy between the soubahdar and the council than had at any previous time existed.\*

The greatest danger of Verelst's government was an event which passed harmlessly away, but which, at the beginning of his presidential career, seriously menaced the peace of Bengal. Shah Abdallah—instigated, it was believed, by Meer Cossim—advanced with a powerful army towards Delhi. The council made demonstrations in favour of "the king," as his imperial majesty was then frequently styled. The cause of his majesty was, in fact, the cause of the soubahdar. His majesty was unable to cope with the Shah Abdallah; and was on the point of submission, when English interposition compelled a compromise. The shah, however, did not return to his capital of Lahore without exacting an indemnity from his majesty of Delhi. The return of the marauder was harassed by the Sikhs, who were then rising into power, and were destined to hold Lahore itself as their capital at a period not remote.

The danger of a war beyond the frontier, as the ally of the emperor, caused the council to urge the company at home to complete the military establishment recommended by Lord Clive. Mr. Verelst exerted himself in treating with the Jauts, Mahrattas, and other native powers; the policy upon which he proceeded having been dictated from home, the object being to form a complete chain of the company's influence and dominion, from the banks of the Caramnassa to the extremity of the coast of the Coromandel.† The vizier (Nabob of Oude) maintained a formidable army; and notwithstanding the terrible defeats endured by him under the government of Mr. Vansittart, and his humiliated position to Lord Clive, he began a new system of intrigues almost as soon as Mr. Verelst was called into power. He first endeavoured, by intimidation, to compel the King of Delhi to surrender to him the fortress, city, and district of Allahabad. His majesty refused to do so, rightly judging that any attempt on the part of his rebellious vizier to seize the coveted territory, would bring the English upon him. The vizier apprehending the same result should he seize the place, had the audacity to attempt the corruption of a British officer. Colonel Smith had remained with a British brigade at Allahabad since the Lahore rajah had made his incursion upon the King of

\* *English Government in Bengal.* By H. Verelst, London, 1772.

† *British Power in India,* Auber, vol. i. chap. iv. p. 182.

Delhi's dominions. The vizier repaired to the colonel, offering a large reward, and to swear eternal fidelity upon the Koran, if that officer would co-operate in delivering the fortress into his hands. The colonel, of course, communicated these facts to his government; and measures were taken to compel the vizier to reduce the army which he maintained as the Nabob of Oude. This purpose was effected after troublesome negotiations; and menaces which, if not executed, would have exposed the British to contempt, but the execution of which, had the nabob resisted, would have involved much expense and bloodshed, and probably new warlike combinations against the British.

There was a disposition to negotiate with the native princes under menaces, which exposed the council to alternatives similar to those which depended upon their failure with the Nabob of Oude, had they been so unfortunate as not to engage him to their demands. There was also a disposition on the part of the council at Calcutta to mix in petty disputes, in the hope by dispossessing one weak rajah after another of his territory, to grasp more for the company. Among minor instances of this, there was one which concerned the Rajah of Hindooput, which very unfavourably impressed the company at home.

In view of the diplomatic meddling which so much engaged the council and Mr. Verelst, the directors wrote a despatch which was one of the most enlightened ever directed to India. It is probable that the opinions of Clive and Hastings found expression in these documents. One was written on May the 11th, 1769, the other in June. The following are extracts:—"We have constantly enjoined you to avoid every measure that might lead you into further connections, and have recommended you to use your utmost endeavour to keep peace in Bengal and with the neighbouring powers; and you, on your part, have not been wanting in assurances of your resolution to conform to these our wishes. Yet, in the very instructions which you have given to the deputies sent up to Sujah Dowlah with professions of friendship, you have inserted an article, which will not only give fresh cause of jealousy to Sujah Dowlah, but engages you likewise in disputes with powers still more distant. We mean the article whereby they are directed to apply to the king for a grant of two or three circars, which belonged, you say, originally to the Eliabad province, but were unlawfully possessed, some time since, by the Hindooput rajah. Is it our business to inquire into the rights of the Hindooput rajah, and the usurpations he may have made upon others? And,

supposing the fact to have been proved, does such an injustice on his part give us any claim to the disputed districts? If the districts in question belong to the Eliabad province, they are a part of Sujah Dowlah's undoubted inheritance; and, supposing him to waive his right, you cannot send a man nor a gun for the defence of these new acquisitions without passing through his country, which will be a perpetual source of dispute and complaint. Nor does the mischief stop here. The Hindooput rajah, who, by all accounts, is rich, will naturally endeavour to form alliances, to defend himself against this unexpected attack of the English. Then you will say your honour is engaged, and the army is to be led against other powers still more distant. You say nothing in your letters of this very essential article of your instructions to the deputies. In several of our letters, since we have been engaged as principals in the politics of India, and particularly during the last two or three years, we have given it as our opinion, that the most prudent system we could pursue and the most likely to be attended with a permanent security to our possessions, would be to incline to those few chiefs of Hindoostan who yet preserve an independence of the Mahratta power, and are in a condition to struggle with them; for so long as they are able to keep up that struggle, the acquisitions of the company will run the less risk of disturbance. The Rohillas, the Jauts, the Nabob of the Deccan, the Nabob of Oude, and the Mysore chief, have each in their turn kept the Mahrattas in action, and we wish them still to be able to do it; it is, therefore, with great concern we see the war continuing with Hyder Naigue, and a probability of a rupture with Sujah Dowlah and Nizam Ally. In such wars, we have everything to lose, and nothing to gain: for, supposing our operations be attended with the utmost success, and our enemies reduced to our mercy, we can only wish to see them restored to the condition from which they set out; that is, to such a degree of force and independence as may enable them still to keep up the contest with the Mahrattas and with each other. It would give us, therefore, the greatest satisfaction to hear that matters are accommodated, both at Bengal and on the coast: and in case such a happy event shall have taken place, you will do your utmost to preserve the tranquillity."

In July, 1769, the bad faith of the French involved the council in anxieties. The French at Chandernagore opened a deep ditch around the town, under the pretence of repairing a drain. This work was followed by others, which were intended to put the place in a position of defence, in contravention of the

eleventh article of the treaty of peace. The English government at Calcutta remonstrated and protested. The French carried on the works with greater energy. The council ordered their destruction. The French government made representations to the court of London, that the works were sanitary and not warlike, and complained bitterly of the unreasonable jealousy of the company's servants. Either these representations were hypocritical and false, or the French government was imposed upon by the French East India Company. The latter supposition is not probable. The French government pretended to have causes for complaint, as it had determined, upon the first favourable opportunity, to endeavour to regain its lost ground in the East. In the letter of the court of directors to the council of Bengal, dated the 27th of June, 1770, the result of the complaint of the French court to that of St. James is thus stated:—"His majesty has constituted Sir John Lindsay his plenipotentiary for examining into the supposed infractions of the late treaty of peace: you will afford him the necessary information and assistance, whereby he may be enabled to answer the complaints of the French plenipotentiary, to justify your conduct, and to defend those rights of the British crown which were obtained by express stipulation in the treaty of Paris, and which appear to have been invaded by the proceedings of the French at Chandernagore."

Sir John Lindsay was not disposed to regard matters in a light unfavourable to France, and much unseemly discussion between the servants of the company and the servants of the crown arose out of the appointment of Sir John. The council was undoubtedly justified in complaining of an infraction of treaty, and in enforcing the observance of it, results proved that the opinion they formed of the temper and intentions of the French from their proceedings in the matter of dispute, was well founded. The year 1770 opened with important changes in connection with Bengal, and with the surrounding states intimately related to it. Mr. Cartier began his career as president. Brigadier-general Smith resigned his command in December, 1769, and Sir Robert Barker took his place. Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, who had lost the king's confidence, was, by a series of ingenious intrigues on his part, reinstated in favour, and was again in full power as vizier of the empire. One of the imperial princes married the nabob's daughter, still further promoting the vizier's power. These official and political changes took place, not noiselessly, but without war. There were commotions at Allahabad, and mutinies of the

troops of the empire and of Oude; yet these important transactions were accomplished without battle, and the collisions of thrones and states. Amidst the rapid vicissitudes thus brought about, Meer Cossim, so long hidden from the observations of the different governments, emerged from his obscurity. The Ranees of Gohud invited him from the Rohilla country to Gwalior. The vizier knew his movements, and supported them. He committed the foolish king to a correspondence with him. Mahrattas, Jauts, Sikhs, and Rajpoots, were engaged in a confederacy to support the part of the new actor upon the great political stage. Motions of the various parties were like the moves upon a chess-board, where the players are equal and the game is drawn. There were demonstrations which portended the accomplishment of the views of each of the various parties in turn, but none obtained the advantages meditated. The French were unostentatiously influencing all parties against the English, but their position was one of such commanding strength that none dared to strike the first blow. The English remained firm and unyielding. As the rock, flinging back the rays of the torrid sun, frowning upon the angry waves breaking against it, and silent and settled while the tempest sweeps around, so English power in Bengal presented a sturdy, noiseless front to the combination of distinct but blended, or concussing, elements of political ambition and power which were gathered around. Band after band of Rohilla, Rajpoot, Mahratta, Sikh, and Jaut, moved about in concert, or in conflict, as waves tossed upon waves in a storm-smitten sea, to be confused and broken.

In March, 1769, the soubahdar of Bengal died of small-pox, and a younger brother, ten years of age, reigned in his stead. Later in the year Rajah Bulwant Sing died at Benares, and was succeeded by Cheyt Sing.

In 1770, the rapid and victorious movements of the Mahrattas caused much uneasiness in Bengal. The menacing attitude which they assumed brought out circumstances which afforded fresh proofs of the weakness and folly of the king, and the perfidy of his vizier. Partly through the good faith of some of the Mahratta generals, and probably as much from the fear which the English inspired among the rest, no inroad was made upon Bengal. The spirit displayed by the French in fortifying Chandernagore in the early part of the previous year pervaded their conduct during that of which we write. They seemed anxious to bring about a rupture between France and England in the hope that, if the English were distracted by a European war, the French in India might form such alliances

with the native governments as would turn the scale of power against the English.

The Mahrattas, however, unwilling to attack the English, harassed their real and pretended allies, and at last seized upon portions of the King of Delhi's territories and of those of the Nabob of Oude. The council at Calcutta resolved to interfere. The force at Dinagepore was ordered to march to the banks of the Caramnassa, and the garrison at Allahabad was reinforced, while two of the king's battalions quartered there marched to the points most in danger from the enemy. The Mahrattas laid siege to Ferokabad, but being deficient in material, they turned the siege into a blockade. The arrangements of the English caused the blockade to be raised without a blow being struck. The Mahrattas, however, departed in many separate bodies, taking various routes, as if determined to fall upon many different places at once, and, by a series of masterly movements and rapid marches, all these divisions converged upon Delhi, which was captured by a *coup de main*. The English afterwards received tidings which proved to be true, that this feat was not quite so brilliant as it appeared to be: the king himself having conspired against his own government, incredible as such a policy may appear. His majesty, fearing that the victorious marauders would proclaim *shah-zada* in his room, adopted this strange course to prevent such a catastrophe. He even hoped that, when in the power of the Mahrattas, they would find it their interest to act in alliance with him, and that his intricate measures would issue in the fulfilment of his long-cherished and romantic desire of reigning in Delhi instead of Allahabad, and of sitting upon the throne of his ancestors unmolested. The vizier, opposed to this measure, deemed it politic to concur, and joined his forces as Nabob of Oude to those of his majesty. The king and his vizier having come to terms with their enemies in a manner so unprecedented even in the fickle policy of Indian states, the company's territory not being attacked, and his majesty and the vizier declaring not only peace but friendship, the English had no pretence for war, but endeavoured by negotiation to obtain various strong posts, which they represented to his majesty were rendered necessary to their security by his majesty's own strange proceedings.

In the month of April, 1772, Mr. Cartier retired from the government of Bengal, and Warren Hastings, then a member of council at Madras, was appointed to the government. There was no other man in India so fit for the important post, nor in England, except Clive.

Before noticing the events of Mr. Hastings' government, some notice of his career since he had left Bengal is here appropriate. It has been already shown that his conduct in India had been most honourable and humane, although his temptations were at least as numerous and pressing as those before which so many fell degraded. Lord Macaulay, in his celebrated essay on Warren Hastings, strangely asserts that little was heard of him up to the period of his leaving India with Mr. Vansittart. Had little been heard of him during that time, he probably never would have become governor of Bengal; certainly he would never have been the ruler of British India. During the whole period of his residence in Bengal he had been a noticeable person. In every meeting of council, while Mr. Vansittart administered the government, Mr. Hastings distinguished himself by the purity of his motives, the soundness of his policy, and a remarkable foresight. He had read the native character profoundly, had acquainted himself with the literature of the East extensively, and had studied political and administrative science *con amore*. He was well known to the native governments and the company's servants in India as a man of genius, and the directors and proprietary at home considered him to be a man of superior capacity before he had left Bengal.

When he returned to England, his time was chiefly occupied in retirement, meditation, liberal studies, and in recruiting his health. He did all in his power to encourage the study of oriental literature in England; and engaged the celebrated Dr. Johnson to some extent in his views; at all events, he left impressions of his own genius and learning upon the mind of that great man, to which the latter afterwards referred with pleasure.

As Hastings had not enriched himself like other "returned Indians," his pecuniary resources were small; and he became so embarrassed that he was compelled to solicit employment from the East India Company. They were very glad to make such valuable services available; and having paid the highest tribute to his talents and integrity which language could convey, they appointed him member of council in Madras. All his little savings had been invested for the benefit of his poor relatives, to whom, like Clive, he manifested the most noble generosity and ardent affection. He was from this circumstance compelled to borrow money to enable him to depart in a manner sufficiently respectable to the high post to which he was designated.

In the spring of 1769 he embarked for

Madras. The voyage was replete with romantic incident, which left a lasting impression upon the mind and heart of Hastings. It is doubtful whether the connexion of an amatory kind—so much to his discredit—formed on board the *Duke of Grafton*, did not exercise an unfavourable influence over his whole moral nature, and over his future career. His character certainly never afterwards appeared in so favourable a light as it had before, although his talent shone out more conspicuously. His moral delinquency could not obscure the brilliancy of his genius—even the sun has spots upon its disc. When Hastings arrived at Madras, he found the company's affairs in a seriously disorganized condition. Lord Macaulay describes with perfect precision the state of things, and the relation which Hastings bore to them, when he wrote, "His own tastes would have led him to political rather than

to commercial pursuits; but he knew that the favour of his employers chiefly depended upon their dividends, and that their dividends depended chiefly on the investment. He therefore, with great judgment, determined to employ his vigorous mind for a time to this department of business, which had been much neglected since the servants of the company had ceased to be clerks, and had become warriors and negotiators. In a very few months he effected an important reform. The directors notified to him their high approbation, and were so much pleased with his conduct, that they determined to place him at the head of the government of Bengal."

In this position matters must be left in the chief presidency, while the reader's attention is turned once more to the Carnatic, and to the regions of Mysore, whose prince then filled so large a space and held so great a name in Indian reputation.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

### BOMBAY AND MADRAS—EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THOSE PRESIDENCIES TO 1775.

DURING the period the history of which in Bengal has been already related, Bombay was the scene of comparatively few incidents of importance, except those which were connected with Hyder Ali, whose exploits will be the subject of a separate chapter. After the destruction of the pirates of Gheria, by Commodore James and Colonel Clive, in 1756, the presidency experienced comparatively little trouble from marauders of that description for some years. By degrees the Malwar pirates acquired strength and boldness, causing alarm to the merchants, and injury to their commerce. In January, 1765, it was resolved to put an end to those apprehensions and injuries by an attack upon the robbers in their stronghold, which was successfully executed; and the fort of Raree, in the southern Concan, was captured. By this conquest security was obtained for mercantile ships, and country boats for many years. The vicinity of the Mahrattas, and the increasing power of that confederacy, made them especially formidable to Bombay, although Madras and Bengal were also much harassed by their fitful and predatory movements against surrounding native states. The Bengal government was disposed to unite with those of the other presidencies in a combined attack upon the Mahratta power, but the Bombay council wisely represented that the Mahrattas on the

Bengal frontier acted independently of the government of Poonah, that an attack upon any would constrain a combination of all the Mahratta chiefs, and that such a combination would prove far too formidable for the English to attack it with any hope of success, especially as it was likely other native forces would join the enemy. These arguments prevailed, and the formidable Mahrattas were allowed to develop their resources and power unchecked by the English, except when aggressions upon native governments in alliance with the English brought the troops of the latter into the field, or their political agents into action.

In May, 1763, Hyder Ali, or Hyder Naigue, as he was frequently then called, attracted the very serious attention of the Bombay government. Previous to this date he had put forth considerable power. He had taken Bednore, Mangalore, and Onore, and his advance into Concan, had struck the country with terror. The obvious aim of Hyder was to bring the sea forts into subjection, and in doing so he professed to act in conformity with the interests of the company, by putting down piracy, preventing its revival, and offering new points for the conduct of legitimate trade. On the 27th of May, he made a treaty\* with the council of Bombay, by which they were

\* *Printed Treaties*, p. 518.

allowed to erect a factory at Onore, a place afterwards rendered famous by a siege. He also afforded them various valuable commercial privileges. In return he demanded seven thousand stand of arms. This placed the council in great difficulty, for the company had issued strict orders against supplying the country powers with arms; yet, if the council had refused compliance, Hyder would have inferred that they distrusted and feared him or that they had ultimate designs against his territory or power. The council endeavoured by half measures to avoid the difficulty; they supplied him with five hundred stand of arms, and by so doing dissatisfied both him and the company. The latter rebuked the council, and renewed, in stern language, their previous prohibitions against affording arms to native princes on any grounds or pretexts, except when allies in actual war. Hyder was disgusted at receiving about one-fourteenth of the number of muskets which he had requested, and being vindictive and suspicious, he cherished a bad feeling to the council, which he deemed it politic to suppress, although he took no trouble to conceal his disappointment and his doubts of the friendliness of the Bombay government. Hyder, however, still pressed for arms from the council, and his demands were complied with. The directors, in referring to their objections to providing native powers with musketry that might prove ultimately hostile, were very particular and authoritative in ordering that no cannon should be given or sold to them, and that none of the coast powers should be aided in obtaining ships of war. The council of Bombay was nearly as prone as that of Bengal to set the judgment of the company at defiance, where vanity, interest, or ambition, prompted a course opposed to the directors. Notwithstanding the most distinct, and even angry orders, from the directors to the contrary, the council permitted Hyder to purchase ordnance, and to build a ship of war at Bombay, to enable him to check the Mahrattas, and other freebooters. Hyder was himself the greatest freebooter in India, and soon made the council to understand that they had armed him for their own injury. The Mahrattas—who were as eager to rob Hyder, as they were to rob every one else, and he was to rob them and all others—were intensely indignant at the conduct of the council. Thus this body, by its short-sighted policy, armed actual enemies under the guise of friendship, and in doing so raised up new enemies. Their proceedings towards this powerful man were full of contradiction. At one time they encouraged the Mahrattas against him, and at another supplied him with arms against

them, notwithstanding renewed orders from the directors, in the most specific terms, not to do so. After all, they wrote to Madras in 1766, while professing friendship with Hyder, requesting the council there to join them in attacking him.\* The Madras government was unwilling to incur such a risk, because of the advantageous military position held by Hyder, and from fear that Nizam Ali would form a junction with him. The Madras council were also of opinion that Hyder acted as a useful check to the Mahrattas. Upon learning the opinions prevalent at Madras, instead of an attack upon the bold adventurer, the Bombay government proposed a treaty of peace. According to this treaty he was to receive annually between three or four thousand muskets, the council persisting in its defiance of the company's orders. The council demanded payment of all monies due to it by the rajahs which he had conquered, and especial trading privileges, of course, to the exclusion of all other European nations. Hyder eagerly grasped at one of the proposals—that he and the English should mutually furnish troops when the territory of either was menaced. It is probable that the council never intended to fulfil all their part of his stipulation, and supposed themselves to be the ingenious fabricators of a very clever trick. At all events, subsequent facts give colour to this supposition.

In 1768, after war between Hyder and the English in India had been for some time waged, they had to renew the treaty under certain modifications,—Hyder still stipulating for warlike stores, the council repeating its concessions on this point, and the directors in London disallowing and protesting against all acts performed by their servants which involved grants of arms and ammunition to native powers. The ground of objection taken by the honourable court in this particular case was, that by such a treaty stipulation Hyder was enabled to add to his military means, and thereby prepare for the first moment favourable to himself to act against the English, alone, or in alliance with other native powers. The views of the directors at home were wise and far seeing; generally they were so when opposed to their servants at the presidencies. Except in cases where men of great or extraordinary genius, such as Clive and Hastings, represented the company's interests in India, the judgment of the directors at home was far more sagacious than that of their governors or councils.

On the 23rd of February, 1771, Mr. Hodges, he president of Bombay, died, and was succeeded by Mr. Hornby. On the 7th of March,

\* *Consultations*, June 1766.



Hyder was beaten in a sanguinary conflict with the Mahrattas; and he applied to the council for help. They were unable to afford it. He felt that he was deceived, and cherished a feeling of vengeance in his heart against those whom he considered his betrayers. The council declared that, although without men or money to spare, they would send him five hundred muskets and four twenty-pound guns. Subsequently, the council acknowledged itself willing to aid him with five hundred Europeans and twelve hundred sepoy, if he paid five lacs of pagodas for them, thus exasperating him yet more. Triumphant over his Mahratta foes, so far as to make it their interest to accept tribute and depart from his dominions, he repeatedly declared that a day of reckoning between him and the English, who had so often deceived him, would yet come.

In July, 1771, the Nabob of Baroch, unsought, repaired to Bombay, and concluded a treaty with the council, by which they were entitled to have a factory at his capital. This treaty was not signed until the last day in November, and it amounted to an alliance offensive and defensive. The nabob had gone to Bombay, for the purpose of engaging the council in his interests; and with the intention, at the same time, of betraying them whenever his interests in so doing might appear. He soon violated all the stipulations of the treaty, and the council recalled their resident from his court. This step was followed up by a military expedition against him, which was dispatched from Bombay under Mr. Watson, "the superintendent of marine," and Brigadier-general Wedderburn. The troops departed from Bombay November the 2nd. On the 14th, General Wedderburn reconnoitred the place, and was killed while so doing. On the 16th, batteries were opened against it, and on the 18th it was taken by storm. The loss of the English was considerable, especially in officers, of whom five were killed, exclusive of the general and a cadet, and six were wounded.

The council having concluded a treaty with Futty Sing Guicowar, the spoils were divided between that chief and the company. Besides the prize of the city, the revenues amounted to seven lacs of rupees.

In the year 1772, special negotiations were opened with the court of Poonah, for the acquisition of Salsette, Bassein, and Caranga. These were of extreme importance, as their possession by an enemy endangered Bombay itself. Mhade Rao, who then governed the Mahrattas, knew the value of these places as well as the English, and refused to cede them at any price. That chief died in November, and was succeeded by his brother Narrain Rao. In August, 1773, Narrain was

murdered in his palace of Poonah, by the agents of Ragoba, his uncle, who was at once proclaimed. This chief determined to make war upon the Carnatic, not, it would seem, to make a permanent conquest, but "to carry chout." Upon proceeding for this purpose with his army, a revolution took place in his capital, which he had to hurry back and suppress. The council resorted to means which were at least of questionable policy and justice, to induce Ragoba to cede Salsette and Bassein, but were again defeated. The feuds then existing among the Mahratta chiefs caused the negotiations of the English and their apparent support of Ragoba in several of his misdeeds, to be regarded with prejudice by various powerful chiefs, and laid the foundations of troubles to come. During the negotiations with Ragoba, the council learned that the Portuguese contemplated the conquest of Salsette. The council resolved to seize the island, or, as they represented the matter, to make available the disposition of the inhabitants to surrender it to them. On the 12th of December, 1774, the forces left Bombay. On the 28th, the fort of Tannat was taken by storm, but not without great loss, Commodore Watson being numbered among the slain. The Mahrattas fought desperately, but British skill and valour conquered. A monument was erected at Bombay to the memory of the gallant Watson.

The first matter of great concern to the council of Madras, during the period which has been already noticed in reference to Bengal and Bombay, was the settlement of the Northern Circars. The French having resumed their possessions in India, in consequence of the treaty of peace in Europe, the president of Madras, in 1765, suggested to Clive, then in Bengal, the desirableness of procuring from the Mogul summids for the circars of Rajah, Mundry, Ellore, Mustaphanagur, Chicacole, and Condavir or Guntoor. On the 14th of October, the council of Madras informed the directors, that at the request of Mr. Palk, president of Fort St. George, Lord Clive had obtained the summids from the Mogul. Differences arose with the soubahdar of the Deccan as to the occupation of the circars, and a treaty was formed with his highness, by which he recognised that occupation, on condition of military aid in the defence of his own territory, or of war occurring between him and any other potentate. Clive appears to have acquiesced in this arrangement, and even to have promoted it, although it was contrary to the policy the directors had ordered to be pursued. The councils of the three presidencies had now involved themselves in treaties with all

the surrounding chiefs which were incompatible, and impracticable, involving the constant peril of war, and of breach of faith. It was next to impossible that the English could either engage in any of the native disputes, or refrain from doing so, without loss of honour. By disobedience to the simple and honest policy imposed by the court of directors, the agents in India had involved the company in complications which were inextricable. The letters from the directors on receipt of the intelligence of the treaty with the soubahdar of the Deccan, are full of sense and spirit, and lay down principles that are indisputably just, for the conduct of their servants in all dealings with the native powers.

The council at Madras was exposed to great anxiety during 1766 from the progress and ambition of Hyder Ali. His troops commanded all the passes from the upper country into the Carnatic. His cavalry hovered about like birds of prey, and it was reported that he had obtained a sumnid from the soubahdar of the Deccan for his own possession of the Carnatic. Hyder's manoeuvres were as treacherous as those of the soubahdar, and as cunning as those of that ruler were weak. The Madras council was now obliged to adopt vigorous measures in regard to Hyder. They sent troops into various refractory districts where his agents had excited the polygars to revolt. They formed a new covenant with the soubahdar of the Deccan, in virtue of which he consented to dismiss his army, called by the directors "a useless rabble," and to allow his places of strength to be garrisoned by the British. It is probable that his highness had no intention of acting upon this covenant beyond a certain show of doing so in the first instance, for the stipulation was never properly carried into effect. The soubahdar was without honour or principle, and was ready to unite with Hyder or the Mahrattas against the company, as either might offer him the higher pecuniary inducement. Hyder, having settled for the time his differences with the Mahrattas, found means of inducing the soubahdar to join him in hostilities against the English. A war now broke out of a most formidable nature, in which the Mysorean freebooter made able use of the vast amount of arms and military stores with which the Bombay council, probably in view of their own profit, had supplied him, in spite of the company's orders to the contrary. The war itself must be treated in a separate chapter. The council of Madras opened a correspondence with that of Bombay for consultation as to mutual defence, as well as the separate action of each presidency upon a

common plan. The policy of the Madras government, and its opinion of the crisis, were set forth in its despatches to the directors. It urged upon the company the absolute necessity of subduing Hyder, if the peace of the Carnatic were to be secured. The chief apprehension of the Madras government as to Hyder was thus expressed:—"It is not only his troublesome disposition and ambitious views now that we have to apprehend, but that he may at a favourable opportunity, or in some future war, take the French by the hand, to re-establish their affairs,—which cannot fail to be of the worst consequence to your possessions on the coast. He has money to pay them, and they can spare and assemble troops at the islands, and it is reported that he has already made proposals by despatches to the French king or company in Europe."\*

Meanwhile, the indefatigable Hyder threatened Madras itself, when the council thus wrote to the directors:—"The continual reinforcements we had sent to camp had reduced our garrison so low, we were obliged to confine our attention entirely to the preservation of the Fort and the Black Town, for which purpose it was necessary to arm all the company's civil servants, the European inhabitants, Armenians, and Portuguese." On the 29th September, when the enemy moved off, the council again wrote:—"As it is uncertain when the troubles we are engaged in will end, and as we must in the course of the war expect to have many Europeans sick, we must earnestly request you to send out as large reinforcements as possible." This letter reached the court by the *Hector* on the 22nd April, 1768. The reply was one of the most masterly despatches ever sent to India. The principles and policy it expresses do honour to the company, and refute many calumnies as to their territorial aggrandizement. The company was not served by men able or honest enough to carry out the views of the directors, who thus wrote:—

"The alarming state of our affairs under your conduct, regarding the military operations against the soubahdar of the Deccan, joined with Hyder Ali, and the measures in agitation with the Mahrattas in consequence thereof, requiring our most immediate consideration, we have therefore determined on this overland conveyance by the way of Bussorah, as the most expeditious way of giving our sentiments to you on those important subjects.

"In our separate letter of the 25th March, we gave you our sentiments very fully on your treaty with the soubahdar of the Deccan.

"After having for successive years given it as your opinion, confirmed by our appro-

\* Letter to Court, 21st September, 1767.

bation, that maintaining an army for the support of the soubahdar of the Deccan was endangering the Carnatic, and would tend to involve us in wars, and distant and expensive operations, and the grant of the circars was not to be accepted on such terms, you at once engage in that support, and send an army superior to that which, in the year 1764, you declared would endanger your own safety.

"The quick succession of important events in Indian wars puts it out of our power to direct your measures. We can only give you the outlines of that system which we judge most conducive to give permanency and tranquillity to our possessions.

"We should have hoped that the experience of what has passed in Bengal would have suggested the proper conduct to you: we mean, when our servants, after the battle of Buxar,\* projected the extirpation of Sujah Dowlah from his dominions, and the giving them up to the king. Lord Clive soon discerned, the king would have been unable to maintain them, and that it would have broken down the strongest barriers against the Mahrattas and the northern powers, and therefore wisely restored Sujah Dowlah to his dominions.† Such, too, should be your conduct with respect to the nizams‡ and Hyder Ali, neither of whom it is our interest should be totally crushed.

"The dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with the possessions we hold in those provinces, are the utmost limits of our views on that side of India. On the coast, the protection of the Carnatic and the possession of the circars, free from all engagements to support the soubahdar of the Deccan, or even without the circars, preserving only influence enough over any country power who may hold them, to keep the French from settling in them; and, on the Bombay side, the dependencies thereon, the possessions of Salsette, Bassein, and the castle of Surat. The protection of these is easily within the reach of our power, and may mutually support each other, without any country alliance whatever. If we pass these bounds, we shall be led on from one acquisition to another, till we shall find no security but in the subjection of the whole, which, by dividing your force, would lose us the whole, and end in our extirpation from Hindostan.

"Much has been wrote from you and from our servants at Bengal, on the necessity of checking the Mahrattas, which may in some

degree be proper; but it is not for the company to take the part of umpires of Hindostan. If it had not been for the imprudent measures you have taken, the country powers would have formed a balance of power among themselves, and their divisions would have left you in peace; but if at any time the thirst for plunder should urge the Mahrattas to invade our possessions, they can be checked only by carrying the war into their own country. It is with this view that we last year sent out field-officers to our presidency at Bombay, and put their military force on a respectable footing; and when once the Mahrattas understand that to be our plan, we have reason to think they will not wantonly attack us.

"You will observe by the whole tenour of these despatches, that our views are not to enter into offensive wars in India, or to make further acquisitions beyond our present possessions. We do not wish to enter into any engagements which may be productive of enormous expenses, and which are seldom calculated to promote the company's essential interests. On the contrary, we wish to see the present Indian powers remain as a check one upon another, without our interfering; therefore, we recommend to you, so soon as possible, to bring about a peace upon terms of the most perfect moderation on the part of the company, and when made, to adhere to it upon all future occasions, except when the company's possessions are actually attacked; and not to be provoked by fresh disturbances of the country powers to enter into new wars."\*

The die was cast as to hostilities with Hyder; both the Madras and Bombay governments were in collision with him, and Bengal sent such assistance as was deemed judicious and practicable.

When, at last, a treaty was made with Hyder, the Circars, which had never been fairly brought under the company's management, were placed by the council under its sole control, the zemindars and other great landholders offering violent opposition. In 1769, however, the subjugation of this refractory spirit was effected, and the company made such arrangements as to its lands as suited its own interests. The introduction of English law to Madras proved a source of contest and confusion, the natives utterly detesting it, and the English using it against the natives as a means of oppression. M. Auber describes the folly displayed in working English institutions, and the turmoil attending it, in the following terms:—"At a moment when the company's affairs on the coast demanded the utmost attention of the council;

\* Court's Letter, dated the 13th of May, 1768.

\* Recorded in a previous chapter.

† An account of these transactions has been given in a previous chapter.

‡ The word nizam is used interchangeably with soubah and soubahdar in Indian despatches and state papers.

when the whole of the country from Tinnevely to the Kistna was involved in troubles, and when the enemy were ravaging the Carnatic, the council were harassed by the violent and litigious proceedings of some members of the grand jury, who obstinately persevered in pressing matters and presentments, which threw the settlement into contentions and embarrassments; whilst, on other occasions, they declined to make a return to any of the bills of indictment brought before them. The jurisdiction of the mayor's court, under the charter, became matter of doubt and dispute; the one party construing the word *factory* in the most extensive latitude, the other taking it in its literal and strict sense."

Suspicious began to be entertained that the French were instigating Hyder and the nizam against the English. As soon as the peace with France restored to that nation its Indian possessions which had been conquered, symptoms of a preconceived determination to gain power were evinced. These were slowly, but surely, developed: still the company's servants felt no apprehensions, the French being relatively weak; moreover, the rapid passage of events between the English and the native princes diverted the councils of Bombay and Madras from noticing the procedure of their old competitors for power.

In 1769 the French made various demonstrations of a nature to lead to the conclusion that hostile movements against the English were contemplated. Pondicherry was fortified, under the pretence of its being in danger from the country powers. Pretexts for fortifying the factories in Bengal were also put forward, as noticed in a previous chapter. These simultaneous efforts to strengthen their positions, when there was really no enemy, awakened the suspicions of the English. Two French transports, of large capacity, had proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope for provisions. Tidings came from the Mauritius that French ships, full of men and military stores, had been seen there. A new settlement was made on the eastern coast of Madagascar, which, from the accounts forwarded of it to Madras, was intended as a military depot, both for men and munitions of war destined for employment in the East. From the Archipelago, French ships of war were reported as cruising about suspiciously, and as having on board troops.

While the council's attention was drawn by so many rumours to the French, the perpetual conflicts among the native powers threatened to involve the company in innumerable wars. The Mahrattas desired the virtual conquest of Mysore. Hyder resolved to resist their demands for chout. The Nabob of Arcot

favoured the pretensions of the Mahrattas. The nizam watched vigilantly for any opportunity which might arise for plunder, by those powers exhausting one another. All these royal robbers sought the aid of the company, pleading the different treaties in which the shallow policy of the councils of Bombay and Madras had involved that body.

Hyder refused the Mahrattas chout in 1770: they made war upon him. He demanded the aid of the company, on the ground of the treaty made the previous year. The council of Madras considered themselves absolved from any obligations of alliance, as Hyder was himself the aggressor. He well knew that they were only eager to escape all obligations on their part, and yet to secure all advantages of the treaty from him. An incurable resentment against the English name and race seized possession of his mind.

Both the councils of Madras and Bombay were entangled in fresh difficulties by the arrival of Sir John Lindsay at the latter place. That officer, besides his influence and rank as an admiral, had received extraordinary powers from the English government, of which the directors disapproved. He declared to both the councils that he was minister plenipotentiary from the royal government. In virtue of this office, he inquired into the causes and conduct of the late war with Hyder. He brought a letter to the Nabob of the Carnatic, from the king, and demanded all the company's papers and documents as he might require them. The council of Madras determined to resist these demands, having no instructions from "their constituents," as they termed the directors on that occasion. The English government had acted without proper concert with the company, and the result was dangerous to the English interests in India. Lindsay treated the council with contempt. The latter body, strong in experience, knowledge of local relations, and sure of obedience from all the company's servants, was resolute in resisting the alleged powers of Sir John. He entered into private correspondence with the nabob, who artfully treated him as a superior authority, and faithlessly intrigued with him against the company. The council was at this time involved in so many disputes, that it is surprising they could attend, in any measure, to the company's trade. Among other quarrels, they had one of serious magnitude with the celebrated Eyre Coote, at this time major-general, and appointed commander-in-chief of the company's forces in Madras by the directors. Sooner than submit to the jealous dictation of the council, General Coote returned to England, and the court of directors censured the council. Examination

of the folly and disobedience of the councils of the three presidencies, and passing votes of merited censure upon them, might have occupied the whole time of the honourable court.

The Nabob of Arcot raised claims upon the Nabob of Tanjore, which during 1770 gave the council of Madras much occupation. The Tanjore nabob gave the English a reluctant support during the Mysorean war, and refused to contribute to the Nabob of Arcot's expenses in connection with that contest, although Tanjore was a rich territory, and the English, acting in the name of the government of Arcot, preserved the peace of the country. Hyder Ali fomented this dispute. It was also discovered that he carried on a correspondence with the French at Pondicherry, while they carried on the new works there.

Sir John Lindsay was succeeded, in 1770, by Admiral Sir Robert Harland, with the same powers. The fleet on the Indian station was much strengthened under the command of Sir Robert. The new admiral had received instructions from the king to treat the company's representatives with careful respect, and to uphold their dignity before the native rulers. When Admiral Harland arrived, he found affairs in great confusion, the result of his predecessor's wrong-headedness. The Nabob of the Carnatic had, with the concurrence of Sir John Lindsay, invited the Mahrattas to join in a confederacy against Hyder, contrary to treaty, and as the council believed, contrary to reason.

Major-general Coote had been prevailed upon to return to India, and the crown conferred upon him the honour of a Knight of the Bath. This was before Sir John Lindsay returned home, and at the same time the same honour was conferred upon him also. The royal government took a most extraordinary course on this occasion, sending the insignia to the nabob, with directions for the investiture. Whether this was the result of some joint intrigue of Lindsay and Coote to spite the council does not appear, but the humiliation it inflicted upon the president was very acceptable to those chiefs. Differences between the nabob and certain rajahs having arisen, an appeal to arms was made, and Brigadier Smith, at the head of a British force, marched against them in April, 1771. Operations were conducted until the 27th of October, when peace was made without the intervention of the council. It appeared as if Lindsay, Coote, and the nabob had entered into a confederacy to ignore the company:—"Sir Robert Harland reached Madras, in command of a squadron of his majesty's ships, on the 2nd of September. He announced

his arrival to the council, whom he met assembled on the 13th, and he informed them that he possessed full powers, as the king's plenipotentiary, to inquire into the observance of the eleventh article of the treaty of Paris; and that he had a letter from his majesty to the nabob. The letter was delivered to his highness by the admiral, the troops in the garrison attending the ceremonial. On the 1st of October, having intimated to the council his readiness to be of any use in the progress of their affairs, he quitted the roads, in order to avoid the approaching monsoon, and retired to Trincomalee, dispatching a vessel to ascertain the state of the French force at the Mauritius, which was reported to be very considerable."\*

Sir Robert Harland soon fell into the snares of the nabob, who induced him to favour an alliance with the Mahrattas against Hyder. The council refused to obey the plenipotentiary, declaring themselves ready to obey all constitutional authorities, such as parliament or the courts of law, but refusing to recognise the admiral in any other capacity than as commander of the king's ships, in which office they would co-operate with him. They persisted in refusing to violate the treaty with Hyder. The alliance offered by the Mahrattas was one which he sought to force upon the nabob, as the admiral himself admitted, by the threat of fire and sword. They refused finally to accept the alliance, and advised the admiral, by a diversion on the Malabar coast, to distract the Mahrattas, while the council would take such care of the Carnatic as their experience suggested, and their power allowed. The alliance proposed by the Mahrattas, obliging the nabob to send troops to their aid, had a significance the admiral did not see. The nabob in accepting a forced alliance, and sending troops into the field to avert the menace of the power thus making itself an ally, accepted conquest, and would be regarded in future by the Mahrattas as dependant upon them.

Matters became worse between the admiral and the council, until they issued in an open rupture. The conduct of the admiral was in violation of the company's charter, and the council resolutely maintained the rights of their employers.

During the year 1772 various expeditions were made, all of them successful, against various polygars who refused to comply with the requisitions of the nabob. Brigadier-general Smith, having accomplished the military enterprises referred to, returned to Madras, and resigned his command. Sir Robert Fletcher was nominated to take it.

\* Auber, vol. i. p. 308.

Immediately, violent altercations arose between him and the council, discord between commanding officers and councils seldom ceasing in any of the presidencies. Sir Robert was obliged to resign, and Brigadier Smith resumed the command.

On the 31st of January, 1773, Mr. Dupré resigned the office of president, which was assumed by Mr. Wynch. The Rajah of Tanjore refusing all allegiance to the Nabob of the Carnatic, Brigadier-general Smith marched to Tanjore, took it by storm, and made prisoners of the rajah's family. It was soon discovered that the Dutch were the chief instigators of the rajah. He had, contrary to his allegiance, as a tributary of the nabob, made over various strong positions to the Dutch, who were compelled by the British ships, and troops acting in conjunction with the forces of the nabob, to abandon them, under circumstances of much humiliation. The conduct of the Dutch was marked by prevarication and bad faith.

Throughout the year 1774, the council was troubled by the caprice of the nabob, whose views were constantly changing; who

regulated his policy towards others by his relative power; the resources of whose country were exhausted, while his avarice still craved; whose ambition was as large as his means were inadequate for even the feeblest enterprise. It was scarcely possible for the council not to perceive that the time was fast approaching, when the English must assume the entire control of the nabob's dominions, or see the Carnatic overrun by Hyder, the Mahrattas, or the nizam.

During the period to which this chapter refers, Warren Hastings, for several years held the high post of member of council. It is probable that to him chiefly, if not exclusively, the credit of every bold and firm measure taken, was due. Yet less is known of Hastings' conduct during his membership of council at Madras than of any other period of his history. His novel career in the capital of the presidency was much to his credit. His duties to the company were discharged with such ability, that he was nominated to the most important office in India, the presidency of the council of Bengal.

## CHAPTER LXXX.

### WAR WITH HYDER ALI OF MYSORE.

In previous chapters, especially the last, reference has been made to Hyder Ali, the Rajah, or, as he preferred being called, the Nabob of Mysore. In the geographical portion of this work descriptions will be found of every part of Southern India, and very particular descriptions of the highlands, and the whole region of the Deccan. A military writer, who made various campaigns in the Deccan during the last century, describes the climate as very favourable for military operations:—"Especially in the high country of Mysore, it is temperate and healthy to a degree unknown in any other tract of the like extent within the tropics. The monsoons, or boisterous periodical rains, which, at two different periods, deluge the countries on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, have their force broken by the ghauts or mountains, and from either side extend to the interior in fertilizing showers, and preserve both the verdure of the country and the temperature of the climate almost throughout the year; inso-much that the British army remained in tents and never went into cantonments throughout the whole year."

In this country of Mysore there arose a man of eminent daring and ability, already repeatedly before the reader as Hyder Ali. It is unnecessary to relate his history; no number of volumes could comprise the story of every able and daring Indian adventurer, native and European, whose sword or whose intrigues have been felt in India. It is sufficient to tell that Hyder was of obscure origin, and in one of the wars of which the great table-land of the Deccan had been the theatre time out of mind, he distinguished himself as a volunteer. He was then twenty-seven years of age. His daring courage made him a conspicuous person, and he gradually attached to himself a body of freebooters. It was not uncommon in India to begin a war-like career as leader of banditti, and end it as a powerful rajah or nabob. Hyder was one of the most remarkable instances of such a gradation. By robbery he became enriched, and he used his riches for the purpose of becoming a plunderer on a grander scale. While yet he was no more than a great robber, he fell in with a holy Brahmin, by whose cunning he was much assisted, and who probably gave

him the first notions of political intrigue. Chiefs and monarchs in India honoured riches more than high-born persons in any other country. Hyder's reputation for riches, no matter how acquired, gained him much admiration; and his well-known ability to defend what he had acquired, added to that admiration. He became recognised as a chief by chiefs, and was known as the fougedar of Dindigul. He soon put down all refractory neighbours, either by artifice or the sword; it was difficult to decide in which way he was the greater. His friend the Brahmin obtained access to the court of Mysore, and apprised his colleague in former predatory adventures of all political matters that might any how be turned to their joint account.

A mutiny broke out in the army of Mysore. Hyder bravely and promptly put it down, earning and receiving royal gratitude. His beloved Brahmin accused the richest chiefs of Mysore as the instigators of the revolt. They were seized, punished in person, and deprived of their estates. Hyder and the Brahmin profited largely by the forfeitures. He had become a chief, high in royal favour, but he was still a robber. He had as little indisposition to kill as to steal. Murder, as an accessory to plunder, was simply regarded as a necessary means towards a very unobjectionable end. He gradually became a rebel, as well as a robber. He took advantage of certain mutinies of the troops for pay, to quiet or quell the disturbances, and gain the unlimited confidence of the monarch, that he might ultimately the more securely dethrone him. After a variety of ingenious and infamous stratagems, in concert with the Brahmin, he succeeded. He and the Brahmin eventually betrayed one another, and this cunning adversary nearly ruined Hyder more than once. The courage of the bold bandit never forsook him, and his competition with his wily antagonist so sharpened his wits that he at last excelled the Brahmin, and all other Brahmins in Mysore, however wicked and acute in the arts of cunning, dissimulation, and far-sighted intrigue. Koonde Row (such was the crafty Brahmin's name) was at last destroyed. The Rajah of Mysore himself became a victim, and Hyder had no more rivals in that country either as to craft or power. Once established on the throne, he scented all disaffection afar off, and soon tried the value of his sabre in suppressing it. He became rich exceedingly, little by little extended his territory, and who could extend territory in India, in his time, without coming into collision with the English? When he became rich, the Mahrattas invaded his country. He fought them with great gallantry, but their cavalry

came as the locusts and eat up every green thing. Hyder purchased them off again and again, when all the resistance of valour and genius was useless against equal valour, perhaps equal genius, and far superior numbers.

Mr. Thornton says the politics of the Decan at this period (1763) presented "an entangled web, of which it is scarcely practicable to render a clear account." Probably Hyder had a clearer view of them than any one else, not even excepting Clive or Hastings. Previous to this time Hyder had intercourse with the Bombay government, which was not always complimentary, but not on the whole unfriendly. The government of Madras had however, formed a league with Nizam Ali against him. The various events rapidly occurred already related in previous chapters, and Hyder had his part in them, or watched them with the vigilance of a statesman. He could neither read nor write, but his memory was wonderful, and his agents were everywhere. His spies overran the country. The French possessed Hyder's sympathy, and to the designs of Lally he was especially no stranger.

In 1766, the Mahrattas, Nizam Ali, and the Madras government were allied against Hyder. The Mahrattas were, of course, first in the conflict. They overran half the Mysore territory before their allies were ready. He bought them off just in time to avert their junction with the other allied forces. The army of the nizam, supported by the British, advanced to the northern limits of Mysore. The English commander, Colonel Joseph Smith, suspected both the nizam and the Mahrattas. Hyder Ali bought off the nizam, as he had already obtained the neutrality of the Mahrattas. The stupid council of Madras would not pay attention to Colonel Smith's information, nor adopt any measures of defence. Their conceit and impertinence disgusted the army, and nearly brought ruin upon the presidency. The nizam joined Hyder. Their combined forces pressed upon the English. Colonel Smith was intelligent and brave, but ignorant of the country. He guarded passes which were not likely to be penetrated; he left unguarded those, more especially one, by which the troops of Hyder poured down like a torrent, sweeping away the outposts, baggage, cattle, and supplies of the English. Hosts of wild horsemen thundered down with the violence and rapidity of a cataract upon the English. Colonel Wood was dispatched from Trichinopoly. Smith directed his energies to form a junction with him, but was attacked by an immensely superior force, which he defeated, slaying two thousand men, himself losing but

one hundred and seventy in killed and wounded. The Mysoreans came on with their hosts of cavalry eddying like a flood, and sweeping away rice-carts, bullocks, and stragglers. Smith, after his men had fought, and marched, and hungered for twenty-seven hours, at last formed the desired junction with Wood. Smith and Wood joined their forces at Trincomalee, where they expected to find adequate stores. The council had, however, thought of nothing but the grandeur of their own policy; no preparations were made for the support of armies in the presence of powerful invaders. Smith was obliged to move away eastward in quest of provisions, leaving his stores, sick, and wounded in Trincomalee. The enemy prepared to assault the place, but Smith, having found some supplies, returned opportunely for its relief. After a short time, another march to gather provisions was necessary; the whole army was occupied in foraging. Forty thousand horsemen of the allies flew around the English, crossing every rice-swamp or corn-field, occupying the tracts which served as roads, desolating the villages, devouring hidden stores of edibles, ravaging everywhere and everything. As vultures gathered upon a field of carrion, the Mysorean troopers found nothing too mean for their prey.

Still the reputation of English valour awed back the savage hordes, and Hyder hoped only to conquer when the English, worn out by fatigue and hunger, could no longer march or fight. In the terrible emergency of the English, relief was found by the discovery of some hidden hordes of grain. The English were fed, and could therefore fight. Hyder knew of their distress, but not of the discovered supplies and the recruited strength which they brought.

On the 26th of September, 1767, the foe opened a distant cannonade against the left of the English lines. Smith moved round a hill, which arose between him and the main body of the opposing forces. He hoped to take them in flank upon their left. The enemy perceived his movement, but did not understand it. They made a movement to correspond with their idea of that of Smith, which they believed to be a retreat. At the same moment both armies were moving from opposite directions round the hill, but the collision coming soon was unexpected by either. Both armies saw the importance of gaining the hill. Captain Cooke succeeded in obtaining it, but not without a close competition. The enemy ascended to a range of crags facing a strong position. Taking them in flank, Cooke gallantly and skilfully carried the post. A regular battle then ensued. The English had

fourteen hundred European infantry, and nine thousand sepoys. Their cavalry consisted of fifteen hundred wretchedly conditioned men, miserably mounted, belonging to the nabob, and a small troop of English dragoons. The enemy numbered forty thousand cavalry, and an infantry force a little less numerous. The enemy had a vast number of useless guns, and about thirty pieces fit to bring into action; the English had as many. The allies formed a crescent, and manœuvred to enclose the small English force. The battle opened by a cannonade, the enemy firing with eagerness and rapidity, but no judgment. The English fired slowly until they found the range, and then served their guns with great quickness as well as deadly aim. The ordnance of the allies was soon silenced. The English then suddenly opened their whole cannonade upon the thick columns of the cavalry, which were arranged in a manner exposing them to such a casualty. The troopers, eager to charge, bore for a few minutes this galling fire, while great numbers fell. No orders were given, the columns broke, and the vast masses of ill-posted horsemen dispersed upon the field. Hyder, with the sagacity of his keen intellect, perceived that the battle was lost, in time to draw off his guns. He exhorted his ally to retire, but the nizam became furious with disappointment and rage, and refused to leave the field. Smith ordered his whole line to charge, the nizam became panic-struck, and ordered a retreat. A curious incident is recorded as having then occurred. The nizam had posted a long line of elephants in the rear of his army, bearing his harem and other adjuncts to his pleasure. The ladies were invited to view the destruction of the English, as, long after, the Russian general, Prince Menschikoff, with oriental taste and similar fortune, invited the Russian ladies to do at Alma. When the nizam directed that his elephants should be moved from the field, a lady called out, "They have not been so taught; they have been trained to follow the standard of the emperor." That standard was soon in the advance, while English bullets flew among the bearers of the palanquins, and many fell for whom these missiles were not designed. The nizam, on a swift horse, attended by a chosen body of cavalry, fled with the utmost precipitation, leaving Hyder to draw off his army as best he could. The wearied English rested on the field of victory.

Next day, the army of Hyder was observed in good formation and regular retreat. The English pursued, and captured forty-one pieces of cannon, in addition to nine which



were left upon the field; sixteen more were abandoned on the march, and fell into the hands of the English. Nearly five thousand men were numbered among the dead upon the field of battle or in the line of pursuit. The English had one hundred and fifty put *hors de combat*. The fugitives continued a hasty flight far beyond the probability, or even possibility, of pursuit. The English withdrew into cantonments as the rainy season approached.

Hyder Ali, ever indefatigable, even in defeat, continued in action, combating the monsoon and the skill of England, warring boldly with nature and science. He captured several small places belonging to the nabob, and then proceeded to attack Amboah, a place peculiarly situated, being built upon a mountain of smooth granite. Hyder laid regular siege to this place, and in five days rendered it no longer tenable, except the citadel, to which the garrison retired. The defenders were five hundred sepoys and a few Europeans, under the command of a brave and scientific officer named Calvert. The native governor was, what native governors usually were, faithless. He was detected, and confined; his guards were disarmed. Hyder's previous success having been through the information supplied by the traitor, he now knew not how to proceed. He accordingly made a breach in an inaccessible place, which was in vain attempted again and again, his troops reeling back after every attack discomfited, and leaving many of their comrades slain. Hyder sent a flag of truce, with eulogistic references to the bravery of the commander, who replied that Hyder had not yet come close enough to enable him to deserve the compliment. Another flag arrived with a large bribe, and the offer of the highest military honours in Hyder's service, if Captain Calvert would surrender the place. The reply was that the next messenger proposing dishonour would be hanged in the breach. From the 10th of November, to the 7th of December, all the efforts of Hyder were in vain. Colonel Smith left his cantonments and hastened to the relief of his brave brothers in arms. Great was his joy when he saw the British flag flying as he approached. Hyder perceiving the advance of Colonel Smith, raised the siege. The government directed that the sepoy regiment which defended the place should bear the rock of Amboah upon its colours.

Smith followed Hyder, but was compelled to give up the pursuit from the deficiency of his commissariat,—an impediment which has since often obstructed British military enterprise, when disgrace was still more reflected upon those in authority, to whom the

real derangement or neglect was attributable. Colonel Smith was joined by Colonel Wood, who advanced from Trichinopoly. Hyder was too much daunted by recent defeats to make any bold attempt to prevent this junction. Not that he wanted courage personally, but he knew that his troops were not of a quality to face the English after such signal and shameful defeats. Hyder was, however, vigilant and active as ever. He attempted various surprises upon convoys, but was defeated by the courage and constant watchfulness of the English officers.

At the close of the year 1767, he ascended the ghauts, leaving strong detachments of cavalry to watch and harass the English army, which was in the deepest distress from want of provisions, the government having wholly left it to itself, and the officers displaying but little talent in commissary affairs, although by skill and bravery in breach and battle, having won for themselves a glorious renown. Hyder Ali now began to fear the English power. Forces from Bengal threatened Hyderabad. His ally, the nizam, now prepared to betray him, as both had betrayed everybody else that trusted them. Hyder was not to be deceived. He represented to the nizam that the latter had adopted a wise course, and pretended to believe that it was done to deceive the English, until affairs took a more favourable turn. He, however, intimated that in future the nizam's army and his own had better operate separately. The nizam affected to agree with all Hyder said, withdrew his army, and the next day openly offered alliance to the English against the man with whom he acted in the field the day before. This was perfectly in keeping with Mussulman faith on the part of one prince to another throughout Indian history. In the diplomatic game which followed, the English played as foolishly as was their custom. The nizam granted everything, on the condition that the English should pay him tribute, which placed matters pretty much as they were before: the English gained nothing but glory. The nizam also granted to the company the dewannee of Mysore, on the condition that *when they conquered it*, he should receive a tribute. The nizam was beaten in battle, but reaped, through the vain and dull council of Madras, all the fruits of victory.

The chiefs on the Malabar coast, who had been reduced by Hyder, now revolted; and the government of Bombay took the field against him. Mangalore was captured at once; the commander of Hyder's fleet surrendered it. Various other places on the coast fell into the hands of the Bombay

officers. Canarese was attacked, but the British were repulsed even with slaughter. Hyder hastened to the coast, with large forces. He approached with such rapidity and skill, and the English exercised so little vigilance, that he was upon them suddenly. In May he was before Mangalore. The English fled in boats, and with such precipitation and confusion that many were slain, and all their artillery and stores were ingloriously captured. Neither Smith nor Calvert were there. Eighty Europeans, and one hundred and eighty sepoy, sick and wounded, remained in the conqueror's hands. Hyder won the whole coast. He then proceeded to Bednore, whither he had summoned the zemindars and other holders of territorial possessions. He informed them that he knew they were more favourable to the English than to him, and that he would punish their disaffection by pecuniary fines.

Mr. Thornton thus describes what then took place:—"A list of the criminals was then produced, and against the name of each an enormous fine appeared. The conduct of Hyder Ali's affairs was marked by great precision; for every purpose there was a distinct provision. Among other establishments nicely contrived so as to contribute to the progress of the great machine of his government, was a department of torture. To this the offenders present were immediately consigned till their guilt should be expiated by payment of the sums in which they were respectively mulcted, and orders were issued for taking similar proceedings with regard to those whose fears had kept them away."

Hearing that the government of Bombay was making preparations to scour the coast of Malabar with a naval and military force which he could not resist, his genius suggested an expedient by which he might retire with some degree of military reputation, and with pecuniary advantage. The author last quoted thus describes his procedure, to this intent:—"With the Malabar chiefs Hyder Ali adopted different means, but not less characteristic, nor less conducive to his interests. It was intimated to them that their Mysorean lord was tired of his conquests in Malabar, which he had hitherto found a source of charge rather than of profit; that if he were reimbursed the expenses incurred in their attainment, he was ready to abandon them; and that it was his intention that the territories of those who refused to contribute to that purpose should be transferred to those who acceded to the proposal. Not one incurred the threatened forfeiture, and Hyder Ali's officers retired from Malabar laden with the offerings of its chiefs."

The Madras government had organized no efficient means of gaining intelligence, and, therefore, were unable to apprise their officers of the route taken by Hyder. Colonel Wood reduced Baramahal, Salem, Coimbatore, and Dindigul, but was unable to retain his conquests, from the fewness of his troops and poverty of material. He attempted to guard the passes, but the enemy eluded his vigilance without difficulty, for he was wholly ignorant of the country, as were all his officers. The duty of providing guides—a task which the nabob could have easily accomplished—occurred to no one, or, at all events, was performed by none. Hyder wrested from Colonel Wood all the conquests the latter had made. Having at his command large bodies of cavalry, Hyder was enabled to confuse the English commander, so as to deprive him of all benefit arising from a well-concerted plan of action. The natives also constantly betrayed the English, surrendering strong places without a blow.\*

Colonel Smith was engaged in operations to the north. On the 2nd of May, Kistnagherry capitulated to him. In June he laid siege to Mulwagul, a strong place, from which he apprehended a protracted resistance. It was betrayed by the killadar. A brother of Mohammed Ali had married the sister of this person, and the former being fougadar of Arcot, had appointed his brother-in-law to exercise under him the fiscal administration of Trincomalee. The principal was removed from office, and the dependent, to avoid giving in his accounts to Mohammed Ali, went over to Hyder Ali. He was now desirous of a change, and offered to betray his trust, on condition that his accounts should be considered closed. Mohammed Ali consented; but there was still a difficulty—the garrison were faithful, though their commander was not. It happened, however, that the killadar had been instructed to raise as large a number of recruits for his master's infantry as was practicable, and to give special encouragement to men who had been disciplined by the English. The killadar informed his officers that he had succeeded in obtaining two hundred such recruits, being two complete companies, and that on an appointed night they were to arrive with their native officers. At the specified time, a party of English sepoy appeared ascending by a prescribed route. They were led by a European officer, Captain Matthews, not only dressed, but painted, so as to re-

\* Of late years much has been written about the fidelity of the native troops previous to 1857, except in occasional defections. The truth is, the English in many wars suffered from the treasons of native auxiliaries and sepoy.

semble a native. At daylight the mask was thrown off, and the place was soon in the possession of the English.\* Colonel Smith followed up these successes by several others. An important accession to his strength was obtained by an alliance with the Mahrattas under Morari Rao. On the day when Smith formed his junction with the Mahrattas, Hyder entered Bangalore with the advanced guard of his grand army. He heard of the junction of the Mahrattas with Smith, and knew the locality of their encampment, for his spies were everywhere. He formed the daring resolution of sending a few hundred light cavalry that night into the Mahratta camp, with orders to penetrate to the tent of Morari Rao, and to return with his head, when the infantry would at once storm his camp, which, thrown into confusion by the loss of its chief, would be routed with slaughter. Morari Rao, like Hyder himself, had organized a spy system, which was nearly perfect. He became aware of the intended attack, and, as so small a body of cavalry were to conduct it, he gave strict orders that none of his troops were to mount, but that his cavalry should remain each man stationed at his horse's head. The orders to the whole force were, to be on the alert and attack all mounted men, without accepting any pass-word or explanation. This order was executed with precision, and had one unfortunate result in the death of Captain Gee, Colonel Smith's aide-camp, who, riding into the Mahratta lines, was mistaken for an enemy, and cut down. Hyder's cavalry were followed so close by his infantry that the camp of Morari Rao would have been attacked in force, but for a curious incident. The state elephant of Morari received an accidental wound: irritated by this circumstance, and the alarm which raged around him, he broke loose, and rushed wildly through the camp, dragging the huge chain by which he had been picketed. Seizing this chain with his trunk, he hurled it furiously at the advancing cavalry of Hyder. They, supposing that the army of the Mahrattas were charging, broke, and rushed back over a column of infantry which was marching in support. The infantry, becoming alarmed, took to flight, and, before they could be rallied, morning dawned, revealing the sheen of the English bayonets as their lines of infantry were in motion.

The council of Madras sent civilian deputies to the camps of Smith and Wood, in a manner similar to that afterwards adopted in Europe by the French Convention, and with similar results. These delegates from the council

were arrogant and self-sufficient, overruling the conduct of the officers in matters beyond the comprehension of the meddlers. The English who occupied Mulwagul were removed by these "field deputies," and some of Mohammed Ali's troops placed there. The Mohammedan commandant sold the place to Hyder, as a previous Mohammedan commandant in Hyder's service had sold it to the nabob. Colonel Wood's strategy proved very deficient, and Smith's superior military talent was by this means, and the pompous interference of the "field deputies," rendered nugatory. When Mulwagul was betrayed, Wood made a movement for its recapture or relief. He was too late for the latter, and unable to accomplish the former. He attempted to take the rock by an escalade, which had nearly proved successful, through the activity, presence of mind, and bravery of an English officer named Brooke. The next day, some light troops of Hyder appeared in the distance. Wood proceeded to reconnoitre, but soon perceived that an army of three thousand horse, and at least an equal number of infantry, with a powerful artillery, were making dispositions to surround his little band. With great presence of mind, more than his usual skill, and the most heroic courage, he forced his way through one body of the enemy after another, and united his little army in a regular retreat. Hyder's forces, increased by fresh accessions, hotly pursued. Although his cavalry were numerous, he used his well-appointed artillery, which was moved rapidly in front. The ground becoming less favourable for either cavalry or artillery, the infantry of both armies skirmished, and so closely pressed were the English, that a general action was inevitable, and as soon as the retreating force could find ground at all favourable, they took it, and stood on the defensive. The positions of the contending forces, and the mode of combat which was necessitated by the peculiar character of the ground, has been described with military accuracy by Colonel Wilks, in the following passage:—"The whole extent of the ground which was the scene of the farther operations of the day, consisted of a congeries of granite rocks, or rather stones of unequal heights and dimensions, and every varied form, from six to sixteen feet diameter, scattered 'like the fragments of an earlier world,' at irregular intervals over the whole surface of the plain. Obliquely to the right, and in the rear of the situation in which the advanced troops were engaged, was a small oblong hill, skirted at its two extremities with an impenetrable mass of such stones, but flat and covered with earth at the top to a suffi-

\* Thornton's *British India*, vol. i. chap. vii. pp. 557, 558.

cient extent to admit of being occupied by rather more than one battalion: the rocky skirts of this hill extended in a ridge of about three hundred yards towards the plain of stones, and under its cover the Europeans had been placed in reserve until the action should assume a settled form. Hitherto, amid a mass of cover and impediment, which bade defiance to a regular formation, the intervals between the rocks, and sometimes their summits, were occupied by troops; the smaller openings were converted into embrasures for guns; and support successively arrived from each army to those who were engaged. It was a series of contests for the possession of rocks, or the positions formed by their union, without any possibility of the regular extension of a line on either side, so that a rock was sometimes seen possessed by Mysoreans within the general scope of English defence, and by the English among the Mysoreans." The overwhelming numbers of Hyder gave him the advantage, in spite of the intrepidity of Wood and his soldiers. The English were giving way, and there was danger of confusion among the sepoy, who seldom behaved even tolerably well in retreat. The tide of victory which set so strongly against the English was suddenly turned by Captain Brooke, the officer who distinguished himself so much in the escalade on the previous day. Brooke had then been wounded, but, notwithstanding his sufferings, fought with a lion heart throughout the conflict which it was now his fortune to terminate. His position was with the baggage, which, with the sick and wounded, he guarded. His troops consisted of four companies and two guns. He perceived a flat rock, which was unoccupied, but which, strategically, afforded a good position. He ascended it, as it was approached easily by a route circuitous and covered with crags and foliage. His wounded men drew up, leaning on such support as they could find. The guns were dragged up and placed in position, and directed upon the enemy with charges of grape, making havoc in their ranks. The position commanded the left flank of the enemy, upon which, if any aid arrived from Smith, it would have appeared. Hyder, perceiving suddenly on his extreme left a body of men which he supposed he had not seen before, believed that some detachments from Smith's division had arrived upon the field. This impression became a conviction, when suddenly, after the first terrible discharge of grape, Brooke and his whole force—even the sick and wounded—all who could raise their voice, suddenly shouted, "Hurrah! hurrah! Smith! Smith!" The British, not being aware of the stratagem, were also imposed upon, and,

repeating the hurrahs and cries of "Smith!" returned with such confidence to the battle that Hyder, believing Smith's whole army was upon him, ordered a retreat. The trick was soon discovered by the acute Hyder, and he again returned to the attack; but his troops were not convinced that new forces had not joined the English, and they came on cautiously. The British had, in the meantime, chosen strong ground, and made such new dispositions of their force as greatly increased their strength. Hyder forced his legions upon the English lines; but they were found to be impregnable. Night closed around the combatants, the English remaining possessors of the field. The rocks, behind which the few British found repeated refuge, saved them. There were not three hundred men put *hors de combat*. Hyder's loss was two thousand.

A conflict of generalship began the next day between the two commanders. Hyder could handle large bodies of men with an intuitive genius. He out-maneuvred the British commander, avoiding a battle, and swooping suddenly upon garrison after garrison, capturing forts, and making prisoners. Among other places he fell upon Bangalore, having, by superior strategy, diverted Wood's attention in another direction. Wood, leaving his baggage and heavy guns in "the Petat" of that city, hastened to encounter Hyder, where the wily chieftain was not to be found, having adroitly misled the British colonel. Hyder seized the whole baggage of Wood's army, the guns, stores of provisions, with merchandise, and some treasure. The inhabitants rushed to the fort for security. The garrison closed the gates to prevent that confusion and over-crowding which would have left the citadel indefensible. The crowd strained forward to save themselves, and their treasures, from the ravages of Hyder's army, until two thousand men, women, and children, were crushed or trampled to death. Wood hastened from Oosoor just in time to find that Hyder was gone, and had taken with him everything of value in the place. The English were obliged to wander about for supplies, the council of either Madras or Bombay appearing to be only concerned in keeping up their dignity, and securing the chief cities of their presidencies. Hyder intercepted Wood's foraging expeditions, drove in his outposts, cut off his stragglers, tore away his newly acquired supplies, and day and night harassed his worn out troops. In one of these harassing attacks, after a running fight of several days and nights, and when Hyder was making the fiercest efforts to cut off the division of Wood, the English were relieved by his

sudden and unaccountable retreat. Major Fitzgerald and Smith's division were at hand. Hyder's scouts brought the intelligence; Wood was ignorant of it, until the roll of the English drums came with welcome and cheering music to his ear. Smith had gone to Madras, to bring the council to a proper appreciation, if possible, of the crisis, and Major Fitzgerald having assumed the command, with praiseworthy energy took measures to relieve Wood. Fitzgerald had very imperfect information of the colonel's condition, but he inferred, from a variety of minute indications, and from what he could gather of the movements of Hyder, that Wood, overpowered, was gallantly struggling in an unequal contest. Fitzgerald might have long wandered in quest of Wood, but for the heavy and in part useless cannonade kept up by Hyder, who, having captured the heavy guns at Bangalore, seemed desirous of annoying, or perhaps hoped to discourage the English by perpetually firing them. Fitzgerald, following the report, arrived in the nick of time to save Wood and his truly gallant little army. Warm were the congratulations of officers and soldiers when they met, and high rose their exultation as their enemy, although still many times outnumbering them, dared not to give them battle.

Fitzgerald found Wood in a state of great depression, which, after the first burst of joy upon their unexpected meeting, returned again. Fitzgerald wrote to Smith, informing him of this, who immediately presented the letter to the council, and Wood was ordered to be sent to them under arrest. This was very cruel, for, however incompetent to contend with such a soldier as Hyder, he was a brave soldier and good officer. He was not adapted to so important a command, but when it devolved upon him, he did his utmost to discharge its duties.

Fuzzul Oola Khan, one of the best of Hyder's generals, entered the province of Coimbatore, and with facility captured one fort after another, until he subjugated the province. An English sergeant named Hoskin, was the only person in any command that showed adequate courage or ability. He was in command of an advanced post, with two companies of native infantry, and one gun. This little force occupied a mud fort, and defended it heroically and cleverly. The fort was not taken, until it was thrown down and lay in rubbish around its defenders. Even then Hoskin disputed inch by inch of its ruins with the aggressors. The contest was sanguinary, and the greater part of the defenders perished before superior numbers. There are no records of Hoskin's fate; his

humble rank, in those days, would prohibit any notice of his ability or heroism, except such as the historian may gather from fragmentary references.

In other provinces the success of Hyder was as swift, and as shameful to the army of the nabob, and the arrangements of the English, as in Coimbatore. In several instances the valour and talent of obscure English officers delayed the progress of the conqueror for a little, but that was all that the English and their allies were able to effect. As Hyder himself marched upon Eroad, he encountered suddenly Captain Nixon, with a force of fifty Europeans and two hundred sepoys. Hyder attacked them with two divisions of infantry numbering probably ten thousand men, and a cavalry force still more numerous. Nixon drew up his small band in good position, and quietly awaited the approach of the enemy to within twenty yards, when they delivered a volley with such coolness that every shot told. The Europeans charged with the bayonet, an instrument of which the Mysoreans were much in dread. Hyder's infantry reeling under the well-directed volley, and charged with such impetuosity at the point of the bayonet, broke and turned from the field. Under another commander, the native army would probably have moved away; but Hyder knew what could be effected; he ordered his cavalry to charge the sepoys flank and rear, and they were sabred to a man. Poor Nixon was among the slain. An officer was the only man who escaped, Lieutenant Goreham. He was fortunately able to speak the language, and claimed the humanity of a native officer.

Hyder Ali made use of Goreham to translate into English a summons to the garrison of Eroad to surrender; and to write a letter to its commander, Captain Orton, to come to his camp, and negotiate terms, promising a safe return if they could not agree. Orton trusted to the honour of a man who had no conception of it. He came. The officer next in command to Orton, was one Robinson, whom Hyder had released on parole, but who broke his parole, and was permitted by the council of Madras to break it. Hyder declared that he was absolved from his obligation to Orton, by the knowledge that Robinson was serving against him. Hyder offered to spare the garrison, and permit them to march out and proceed to Trichinopoly, if Orton would order Robinson to surrender. Orton gave the order, Robinson obeyed it; Hyder walked into the place, triumphing alike over the stupidity and dishonour of the English officers, who acted like men demented. Robinson was clearly a man without personal scruple or military pride. Wilks explains the

conduct of Orton on the supposition that he was a drunkard. Hyder, who kept no faith, did not permit the garrison to go to Trichinopoly, but sent them prisoners to Seringapatam, where he cast them into a loathsome dungeon, and deprived them of adequate subsistence. He hated the English with a keen and unpitied animosity, and burned for every opportunity of gratifying and displaying his vindictiveness. The English had by tergiversation, time serving, and unsteadiness of policy merited his wrath and contempt. Had the councils of Madras and Bombay followed the honourable and wise policy pointed out by the directors, had they obeyed orders given repeatedly, and as often violated, the humiliations inflicted by Hyder would never have been visited upon them.

Hyder next proceeded to Caveriporam, and summoned the garrison to surrender, offering the release of the officer and garrison on parole. The conditions were accepted; Hyder seized the place, and violated as usual the terms of capitulation. The garrison, with Captain Frassain, their commander, were sent to the dungeons of Seringapatam, where already several of the prisoners, among whom Captain Robinson, as the first victim, had already perished. The career of Hyder and his generals was one of complete success, the country everywhere within the sphere of operations being desolated or held by his forces. The council at Madras was terrified, and having provoked the war by their uncertain and arrogant policy, after having armed the enemy they thus provoked, they were glad to sue for peace. Hyder requested that an English officer should be sent to negotiate, and the choice of the council fell upon the gallant Captain Brooke, who had repeatedly distinguished himself by talent and valour in the field. Mr. Thornton thus describes the diplomatic occurrences which ensued:—"Hyder Ali requested that an English officer might be sent to confer with him, and Captain Brooke was dispatched thither in compliance with his wish. Hyder Ali expatiated on the aggressions of the English, and on his own desire for peace; on the exertions he had made to promote that object, and on the unreasonable manner in which his overtures had been rejected; on the wrongs which he had received from Mohammed Ali, and on the evil effects of that prince's influence in the councils of the English. He referred to the advantage of maintaining Mysore as a barrier to Arcot against the Mahrattas, and, adverting to a threatened invasion by that power, intimated that he could not oppose both them and the English at the same time, and that it remained for the latter power to determine

whether he should continue to shield them from the former as heretofore, or whether he should unite with the Mahrattas for the destruction of the English. Captain Brooke, in reply, pointed out the superior advantages of an alliance with the English to one with the Mahrattas, to which Hyder Ali assented, and expressed a wish that Colonel Smith should come up to the army invested with full powers of negotiation. Captain Brooke suggested that Hyder Ali should send a vakeel to Madras. This he refused, on the twofold ground that it would give umbrage to the Mahrattas, and that at Madras all his efforts for peace would be frustrated by Mohammed Ali. Before taking his leave, Captain Brooke suggested to Hyder Ali that there was one proof of his friendly and pacific disposition which might readily and at once be afforded: the discontinuance of the excesses by which the country was devastated, and the defenceless inhabitants reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. The proposal met probably with all the success which the proposer expected. Of friendly professions Hyder Ali was profuse, but of nothing more. He answered that his treasury was not enriched by the excesses complained of, but that he had been compelled to accept the services of some volunteers whose conduct he could not control. The report of this conversation was forwarded to Madras, and Mr. Andrews, a member of council, was deputed to negotiate. He arrived in the camp of Hyder Ali on the 18th of February, 1769, and quitted it on the 21st, with proposals to be submitted to the governor and council, having previously concluded a truce for twelve days. The governor of Madras had every reason to desire peace: so great was their distress that the company's investments were entirely suspended, and it was stated that their resources were insufficient to carry on the war more than four months longer.\* Hyder Ali's proposals were, however, rejected, and hostilities recommenced. Colonel Smith, who had returned to the field, watched the movements of Hyder Ali with unceasing vigilance, and frequently counteracted them with admirable skill. The manœuvres of the two armies had brought them about one hundred and forty miles to the southward of Madras, when suddenly dismissing nearly the whole of his infantry, the greater part of his cavalry, together with his guns and baggage of every description, Hyder Ali, with six thousand horse, advanced rapidly towards that place, and on the 29th of March appeared before it. A small party of infantry joined him on the following day.

\* Separate Letter from Fort St. George, 8th March, 1769.

He immediately caused a letter to be addressed to the governor expressing a desire to treat for peace, and requesting that Mr. Dupré, a member of council and next in succession to the chair, might be deputed to attend him. The character of the man who made this demand, the place from which it was made, and the circumstances under which he had arrived there, all contributed to secure attention to the message. Mr. Dupré proceeded to the camp of Hyder Ali on the morning of the receipt of his letter, and, after a series of conferences, the terms of a treaty were agreed upon. The treaty was executed by the governor and council on the 3rd of April, and by Hyder Ali on the 4th. With reference to the circumstances under which the peace was concluded, Hyder Ali may be regarded as having displayed much moderation. A mutual restoration of captured places was provided for, and Caroor, an ancient depen-

dency of Mysore, which had been for some time retained by Mohammed Ali, was to be rendered back. After the conclusion of the treaty, difficulties arose from a demand of Hyder Ali for the liberation of some persons kept prisoners by Mohammed Ali, and of the surrender of some stores at Colar. With much persuasion the nabob was induced to comply with the former demand, and the latter was yielded by the British government, probably because it was felt to be vain to refuse.\*

Thus terminated the war with Hyder Ali—a war which was needlessly and improvidently commenced, and conducted, on the part of the Madras government, with singular weakness and unskillfulness. Its conclusion was far more happy than that government had any right to expect either from their own measures, or from the character of their enemy.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

### HOME AFFAIRS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY FROM 1750 TO 1775—IMPEACHMENT AND ACQUITTAL OF CLIVE—CHANGE IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMPANY.

THE history of events in India having been brought down to a considerably later period than that of the home incidents by which they were influenced, it is necessary to relate what happened in the company's proceedings as the tidings reached England of so many and great vicissitudes in the East. In relating those changes, such frequent reference has been made to the directions received in India from the company, and to the general policy of the directors, that it will not be necessary to recount the minutiae of the company's proceedings, nor to go much into detail in describing their fluctuating fortunes.

When the second half of the eighteenth century began, the company's affairs were much tried at home by the too great eagerness of the proprietary for large dividends. So long as there was prosperity in that respect, the proprietors of India stock did not much trouble themselves as to how events went in India. The successes of Clive, however, excited so much public attention, that from that period a more enlarged interest in the affairs of India was felt by the proprietary. During the year 1754 he was "a lion" in England, and popular opinion marked him out for future achievement.

In March, 1755, when he was appointed a member of council for Madras, the directors were nearly as much influenced by the general

feeling of the proprietors as by their own convictions that he was "the right man in the right place." The French were at this period the rivals most dreaded by the company and the country, and all measures adopted by them to curb French power in the East were regarded by the people of England as patriotic. This general sentiment strengthened the hands of the directors, and enabled them to supply men and material of war in a measure that would otherwise have been impossible, while the company was an object of such extensive commercial jealousy. One cause of much of the anxiety of the directors, and of a large amount of the mal-administration and confusion in India, was the complicated forms of government contrived in London for the regulation of the presidencies. Various attempts to remove and to modify this evil were made by the independent proprietors; Clive himself pointed it out with his usual vigour and clearness of expression, but no change found favour either with the directors or the councils in India. The difficulties under which the directors laboured from the slowness of communication, and their imperfect maritime arrangements, were then very great; while the rapid occurrence of great events in India baffled all their efforts to keep pace with them

\* *History of the British Empire in India*, Thornton, vol. i. chap. vii. pp. 570—575.

in their arrangements. The councils at the presidencies, not fully appreciating these difficulties, constantly complained of neglect. They perpetually demanded men and stores, which they often recklessly employed on enterprises not contemplated nor approved of by the directors. The sense which the court entertained of their arduous difficulties from all these causes, is well expressed in their letter to Bengal, 1760 :—"The forces that went abroad last year and are now destined for India, will demonstrate that your employers labour incessantly to strengthen and protect their settlements, the glorious successes at home having enabled the government to grant us large succours, and we must gratefully confess the ministry's care of this company. The many remonstrances in almost every letter would have been spared, if you had reflected properly on our cruel and dangerous situation; our mercantile concerns always giving place to men and stores, when we could possibly obtain them; ever distressed for tonnage, as we carry abroad for the government seldom less than one thousand tons annually, exclusive of their men and baggage. The heavy demorage incurred by ships detained by accident or otherwise in India; the immense expenses at Madras, with very scanty returns; your own charges very great, those of Bombay beyond all bounds; our settlements in Sumatra, at the same time, requiring large sums to put them in some state of security against enemies and dangerous neighbours; if these considerations had been duly weighed, your injurious insinuations of being neglected must have been turned into praise, that your employers could do so much under such untoward circumstances. We ourselves look back with wonder at the difficulties we have surmounted, and which, with our contracted capital, must have been impossible, if the proprietors, generously and without a murmur, had not consented to reduce their dividend twenty-five per cent.; but with all our economy and care, unless our servants studiously attend to lessen their charges and increase our advantages, the burthen will be too great for us to bear much longer."

The gratitude expressed towards the ministry in that letter was deserved, for upon the increase of the company's military forces, and especially when intelligence arrived that the French and other European rivals held out every temptation to the sepoys and other mercenaries in the English service to desert, measures were taken by the government to extend and enforce the company's military authority. An act was passed which enabled them to hold courts-martial for the punishment of mutiny and desertion.

When Clive returned to England the second time, he received personally, July 16th, 1760, from the directors, their "unanimous thanks for his many eminent and unparalleled services." It is a sad illustration of the corruption of human nature, that a few years later, when no further advantages were expected from Clive's military and administrative genius, these "many eminent and unparalleled services" were so little regarded, that the court of directors endeavoured to strip him of his property and appropriate it to themselves.

In 1760, however, it was the policy of the company to praise him; accordingly, in September of that year, the proprietors marked their sense of Colonel Clive's services by a public resolution of thanks to him, Admiral Pococke, and Colonel Lawrence. They also resolved unanimously, "that the chairman and deputy chairman, when they wait upon Vice-admiral Pococke, Colonel Clive, and Colonel Lawrence, will desire those gentlemen to give their consent that their portraits or statues be taken, in order to be placed in some conspicuous parts of this house, that their eminent and signal services to this company may be ever had in remembrance." Thus the proprietary at large rivalled the directors in eulogising and conferring honours upon him: a few years later, and their rivalry was as signal in vituperating him, and endeavouring to wrench from him property which he had acquired with the sanction of the honourable court. Clive was, however, destined to render further services to the company, and to be still more an object of their panegyric before ingratitude and persecution marked him for their victim. In 1764, after the unfortunate government of Mr. Vansittart in Bengal, Clive, as has been already shown in the history of that presidency, was appointed governor and commander-in-chief. The circumstances attending his appointment were of considerable home interest to the company, and excited much attention from all classes in the country.

There was a person in the direction of the company named Sullivan, by whose influence a series of injuries and annoyances to Clive were set on foot. Among other acts of hostility to him, they refused to recognise his jaghire, which had been conferred on him as already related with the company's approval. As this landed estate was worth £30,000 a year, and the company was his tenant, it was deemed a good prize, and of easy attainment. Clive was compelled to take leading proceedings for the recovery of his rights, the lawyers having declared that his claims were legal and equitable. The company had no ground for re-



sisting them except that to appropriate to themselves Clive's property would be an advantage. Sullivan was perhaps actuated as much by jealousy of Clive's influence as by cupidity. The latter motive was that which chiefly prevailed with the rest of the directors.

When the advices from Bengal, dated September 3rd, 1763, were received by the directors, great excitement was produced in the honourable court, and among the public. These advices were received on the 4th of February, 1764, and informed the directors of the war with Meer Cossim, and the death of Mr. Amyatt in the conflict at Moorshedabad. On the 8th of February, an advertisement appeared in all the London newspapers, conveying the intelligence that had been received. A special grand court was called on the 27th of February, according to that provision in the constitution of the company, under which nine proprietors might call such a meeting. On the 29th of February, the 1st of March, and the 12th of that month, the court also assembled. All the revolutions which had taken place in Bengal since the first English acquisitions were made, became subjects of discussion. Long and angry debates ruffled the usually smooth surface of the company's meetings. The appointment which the directors had made of making Mr. Spencer governor of Bengal was "referred back again to them," and an outcry for the re-appointment of Clive arose which could not be stifled. He was then Lord Clive. His lordship was present at the meeting on the 12th of March, and expressed his willingness to serve the company, if he were assured that the court of directors were well disposed towards him; but he declined coming to any resolution at that moment.

It soon transpired that Clive believed the deputy-chairman, Mr. Sullivan, was his enemy. That gentleman almost controlled the direction. He was a man of vast influence and energy, and pertinacious in the extreme. He and Clive were at constant variance; and Clive resolved never to serve abroad if Sullivan ruled at home. In a letter addressed to the court of directors, March 28th, he expressed his resolution in terms firm, but modest and polite. He declared that he considered the measures of Mr. Sullivan utterly destructive to the interests of the company; but expressed himself as ready, if that gentleman were deprived of what was called "the lead" in the company's affairs, to accept the appointment, even if the affairs of Bengal should prove to be in a worse condition than during the time of Suraj-ad-Dowlah. To this letter the directors made no reply. The annual election for the directory took place

on the 12th of April. On the 13th "new chairs were chosen, and Mr. Sullivan returned into the body of the court."

On the 18th, the directors renewed their correspondence with Lord Clive, who attended there for the purpose of a conference, at their invitation, the next day. He then started new objections to his acceptance of the honours proffered to him. These were the presence in Bengal of Mr. Spencer, with whom he alleged many of the company's agents would no longer serve; and the disadvantage to himself personally of proceeding to India, while a law-suit in reference to his jaghire continued.

On the 27th, the court rescinded the nomination of Mr. Spencer to the council of Bengal, and re-appointed him to Bombay. This appears to have conciliated Clive, who, knowing of the intention of the directors as to Spencer, prepared proposals of a concessive nature concerning his jaghire. Without waiting for the company's acquiescence in these, he accepted their nomination, and was sworn in, on the 30th of April, as president of Fort William and commander-in-chief of the company's forces there.

On the 5th of May, the general court granted to his lordship the income of the jaghire for ten years—that is to say, they made him a present for ten years of an income which was his own for ever; and this was done with a show of magnanimity, and consideration for his "eminent and unparalleled services." The results of these proceedings have been recorded in their proper place in a previous chapter. The comments of Mr. Mill upon the whole of these transactions are inaccurate, and expressed in a spirit unjust to the company and to Clive. Whatever Mr. Mill has written, receives currency to a greater extent among liberal persons not well informed on Indian subjects, than the statements of any other writer obtain; it is therefore important to draw attention to instances in which he allowed his peculiar opinions to sway his mind, to the prejudice not only of the East India Company, but against the reputation of his own country. In the history of the East India Company, there were unhappily too many episodes discreditable to that body and to Englishmen; but it is unworthy of a great writer and able man to subserve his peculiar commercial, economical, or political opinions, by seizing upon every apparent error, and twisting it into a crime, and by perpetually turning aside from the true line of fact to attribute motive, and misconstrue the intention of those to whose opinions and principles he is opposed.

On the proceedings between Clive and the

company, related above, Mr. Mill thus animadverts:—"During the military and political transactions which so intensely engaged their servants in India, the courts of directors and proprietors remained for several years rather quiet spectators and warm expectants, than keen and troublesome controllers. When they had been agitated for a while, however, by the reports of mismanagement which were mutually transmitted to them by Vansittart and his opponents; and, at last, when they were alarmed by the news of a war actually kindled with the nabob, of the massacre of so many of their servants, and the extensive spirit of mutiny among the troops, their sense of danger roused them to some acts of authority. Though Clive had quitted India with an act of insult towards his employers, which they had highly resented; though the directors had disputed and withheld payment of the proceeds of his jaghire, for which he had commenced a suit against them in the Court of Chancery; he was now proposed for governor, as the only man capable of retrieving their disordered and desperate affairs. Only thirteen directors, however, were found, after a violent contest, to vote for his appointment; while it was still opposed by eleven. Yet the high powers which he demanded, as indispensable for the arduous services necessary to be performed, though strongly opposed, were also finally conferred. He was invested with the powers of commander-in-chief, president, and governor in Bengal; and, together with four gentlemen, named by the directors, was to form a select committee, empowered to act by their own authority, as often as they deemed it expedient, without consulting the council, or being subject to its control." Almost every line of that passage makes a misstatement, or conveys by implication some misrepresentation.

It is not true that the court of directors remained quiet spectators rather than troublesome controllers. No impartial person can read the correspondence between the councils and the directors without coming to an opposite conclusion. A very cursory inspection of documents and authorities at the India-house must assure any honest mind that the directors showed activity and vigilance, answering all correspondence with promptitude, and furnishing such means as they could against contingencies. So frequently was the company deceived, by both intentional and unintentional misstatements from the councils, that the measures they took did not correspond with eventualities. It is not true that there was any indisposition to control their servants, when clearly aware that those servants were doing wrong. There

were instances in which some want of energy was, in this particular, displayed, as has been noticed in previous chapters. But the time it required to receive intelligence and send back orders was so great as frequently to paralyse the power of the directors, and enable the councils to answer their masters with promises which they did not intend to perform. As soon as the directors knew that Spencer, Amyatt, and others, had perversely disobeyed their orders and committed their honour, these persons were either removed to other spheres or dismissed. In the case of several, more especially Aymatt, the penal resolutions of the directors failed to take effect, as these persons had already paid the penalty of life, for their impolicy or oppression, upon the field of their errors. By the expression "warm expectants," Mr. Mill evidently means that the directors awaited eagerly for such tidings of revolution and plunder as would fill the treasury at home. If this be not the meaning, the whole tone of the context is such as to convey the impression. M. Auber\* remarks upon this passage:—"There is nothing which authorizes the inference, that they were, at that period, 'warm expectants,' (it is presumed) either of new acquisitions or exorbitant gains. They desired the means of meeting the heavy expenditure which the operations in that country had entailed upon the company. They advised and directed, where advice and direction could be safely given; and, although they wisely abstained 'from controlling any measures which the exigency of circumstances might have called for on the part of the council, they communicated their sentiments and wishes thereon to their servants.'" The course taken by the directors in this last respect was the only rational one. The sphere of operation was too remote for a direct control; the only plan was to entrust their servants with a large discretion, and hold them personally responsible. M. Auber meets the allegation of Mill, that the directors were only at last roused to a sense of their danger to resort to some acts of authority, by the hostilities against the nabob, the massacres of so many of their servants, and the extensive spirit of mutiny among their troops, in the following terms:—"The directors had exercised the acts of authority referred to before any such news had reached England. The death of Mr. Amyatt was not known to the court until three weeks after he had been removed from the service; the account of the massacre did not arrive until three months, and that of the mutiny until six months, after the appointment of Lord Clive; and, instead

\* *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. iv. pp. 129, 130.

of its having been considered an extensive mutiny, the court of directors, on the 11th of October, 1764, caused the following notice to be issued through the daily papers: 'We can with good authority, assure the public, that although by the last advices from Bengal (7th February), the East India Company were informed there had been a mutiny among the troops, instigated and encouraged by some French soldiers, about one hundred and fifty in number, who had enlisted in the company's service, yet the same, at the time of dispatching those advices, was quelled, without the loss or desertion of a single European, except those Frenchmen above-mentioned.'" M. Auber also remarks:—"The appointment of Lord Clive was that of the court of proprietors, and not of the court of directors. With regard to the high powers stated to have been 'demanded,' it would be inferred from the statement that they formed one of the stipulations under which his lordship accepted the office of president; whereas he was sworn in on the 30th of April, and it was not until the 25th of May that the recommendation of the committee of correspondence which was agreed to in personal communication with, and not in consequence of any demand from his lordship, was adopted by the majority of the court. It was on that occasion that the eleven directors dissented, not from his appointment, but from the resolution conferring such powers on the select committee, which was to consist of four members besides his lordship; and so far from the act conferring such powers being unusual, the principle had obtained of appointing a select committee to act irrespective of the council, since February, 1756. In the instance of the expedition to Madras, under Colonel Forde, in 1758, the select committee acted under such powers, as appears by the consultations of the 21st of August in that year. In the instance of Mr. Vansittart, in February, 1764, only three months preceding the proposition for conferring the powers in question on Lord Clive, and the committee, full powers had been given by the court to Mr. Vansittart, 'with authority to pursue whatever means he judged most proper to attain the object. He was in all cases, where it could be done conveniently, to consult the council at large, or, at least, the select committee, though the power of determining was vested in him alone!'"

While Clive was engaged in Bengal, the company at home was much chagrined and scandalized by the communications which he made of the corruption of the court of Bengal. It is much to be wished that the conduct of the company to Clive himself in pecuniary matters had been as honourable as it was

upon receipt of his communications, and as they insisted the conduct of their councils ought to be in their dealings with native peoples and princes. The subject of presents from native princes to the servants of the East India Company, upon any revolution or great political change, was a difficult subject to adjust. Mr. Mill, in his history, places the lists of recipients before his readers, and shows the aggregate amount which in less than ten years, as was proved before a committee of the House of Commons, was received. This list, with the prefatory remarks of Mr. Mill, will interest our readers:—

"The practice which prevails in all rude governments of accompanying an application to a man in power with a gratification to some of his ruling passions, most frequently to the steadiest of all his passions, his avarice or rapacity, has always remarkably distinguished the governments in the East, and hardly any to so extraordinary a degree as the governments of the very rude people of India. When the English suddenly acquired their extraordinary power in Bengal, the current of presents, so well accustomed to take its course in the channel drawn by hope and fear, flowed very naturally, and very copiously, into the lap of the strangers. A person in India, who had favours to ask, or evil to deprecate, could not easily believe, till acceptance of his present, that the great man to whom he addressed himself was not his foe. Besides the sums, which we may suppose it to have been in the power of the receivers to conceal, and of the amount of which it is not easy to form a conjecture, the following were detected and disclosed by the committee of the House of Commons, in 1773:—

*"Account of such sums as have been proved or acknowledged before the committee to have been distributed by the princes and other natives of Bengal, from the year 1757 to the year 1766, both inclusive; distinguishing the principal times of the said distributions, and specifying the sums received by each person respectively."*

Revolution in favour of Meer Jaffier, in 1757.

	Rupees.	Rupees.	£
Mr. Drake (Governor)		280,000	31,500
Colonel Clive as second in the select committee	280,000		
Ditto as commander-in-chief	200,000		
Ditto as a private donation	1600,000*		
		-2,080,000	234,000

\* It appears, by the extract in the appendix, No. 102, from the evidence given on the trial of Ram Churn before the governor and council in 1761, by Roy Dulip, who had the principal management in the distribution of the treasures of the deceased nabob, Suraj-ad-Dowlah, upon the accession of Jaffier Ali Cawn—that Roy Dulop then

	Rupees.	Rupees.	£
Mr. Watts as a member of the committee . . .	240,000		
Ditto as a private donation . . . . .	800,000		
	<hr/> 1,040,000		117,000
Major Kilpatrick . . . . .	240,000		27,000
Ditto as a private donation . . . . .	300,000		33,750
Mr. Mauningham . . . . .	240,000		27,000
Mr. Becher . . . . .	240,000		27,000
Six members of council one lac each . . . . .	600,000		68,200
Mr. Walsh . . . . .	500,000		56,250
Mr. Scrafton . . . . .	200,000		22,500
Mr. Lushington . . . . .	50,000		5,625
Stipulation to the navy and army . . . . .		600,000	

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1,261,075

*Memorandum.*—The sum of two lacs to Lord Clive, as commander-in-chief, must be deducted from this account, it being included in the donation to the army . . . . . 22,500

Lord Clive's jaghire was likewise obtained at this period\* . . . . .

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1,238,575

#### Revolution in favour of Cossim, 1760.

Mr. Sumner . . . . .		28,000	
Mr. Holwell . . . . .	270,000		30,937
Mr. M'Guire . . . . .	180,000		20,625
Mr. Smyth . . . . .	134,000		15,354
Major Yorke . . . . .	134,000		15,354
General Calliand . . . . .	200,000		22,916
Mr. Vansittart, 1762, received seven lacs; but the two lacs to General Calliand are included; so that only five lacs must be counted for here . . . . .	500,000		58,333
Mr. M'Guire 5000 gold mohrs . . . . .	75,000		8,750
		<hr/> 200,269	

#### Revolution in favour of Jaffier, 1763.

Stipulation to the army . . . . .	2,500,000		291,666
Ditto to the navy . . . . .	1,250,000		145,833
		<hr/> 437,499	

Major Monro† in 1764 received from Bulwan Singh . . . . .		10,000	
Ditto from the nabob . . . . .		3,000	
The officers belonging to Major Monro's family from ditto . . . . .		3,000	
The army received from the merchants at Benares . . . . .	400,000		46,666
		<hr/> 62,666	

#### Nujum-ad-Dowlah's accession, 1765.

Mr. Spencer . . . . .	200,000		23,333
Messieurs Pleydell, Burdett, and Gray, one lac each . . . . .	300,000		35,000

received, as a present from Colonel Clive, one lac, 25,000 rupees, being five per cent. on 25 lacs. It does not appear that this evidence was taken on oath.

\* This, as noticed by Sir J. Malcolm, *Life of Clive*, vol. ii. p. 187, is incorrect. The jaghire was not granted till the end of 1759, two years after Meer Jaffier had been seated on the throne.

† It appears Colonel Monro accepted a jaghire from the king, of £12,500 a-year, which he delivered to the Nabob Meer Jaffier, the circumstances of which are stated in the Journals of the year 1825.

	Rupees.	£
Mr. Johnstone . . . . .	237,000	27,650
Mr. Leycester . . . . .	112,500	13,125
Mr. Senior . . . . .	172,500	20,125
Mr. Middleton . . . . .	122,500	14,291
Mr. Gideon Johnstone . . . . .	50,000	5,833

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\*139,357

General Carnac received from Bulwan Sing in 1765 . . . . .	80,000	9,333
Ditto from the king . . . . .	200,000	23,333
Lord Clive received from the Begum in 1766 . . . . .	500,000	58,333
		<hr/> 90,999

#### Restitution—Jaffier, 1757.

East India Company . . . . .	1,200,000	
Europeans . . . . .	600,000	
Natives . . . . .	250,000	
Armenians . . . . .	100,000	
	<hr/> 2,150,000	

#### Cossim, 1760.

East India Company . . . . .	62,500	
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#### Jaffier, 1763.

East India Company . . . . .	375,000	
Europeans, Natives, &c. . . . .	600,000	
	<hr/> 975,000	

#### Peace with Sujah-ad-Dowlah.

East India Company . . . . .	5,000,000	583,333
Total of presents, £2,169,665.		
Restitution, &c., £3,770,833.		
Total amount, exclusive of Lord Clive's jaghire . . . . .		<hr/> £5,940,498

*Memorandum.*—The rupees are valued according to the rate of exchange of the company's bills at the different periods."†

Mr. Mill wisely and eloquently remarked upon these facts—"That this was a practice presenting the strongest demand for effectual regulation, its obvious consequences render manifest and indisputable. In the first place, it laid the nabobs, rulers, and other leading men of the country, under endless and unlimited oppression; because, so long as they on whom their whole power and influence depended were pleased to desire presents, nothing could be withheld which they either possessed or had it in their power to ravage

\* These sums appear by evidence to have been received by the parties; but the committee think proper to state that Mohammed Reza Cawn intended a present of one lac of rupees to each of the four deputies sent to treat with Nujum-ad-Dowlah upon his father's death; viz. Messrs. Johnstone, Leycester, Senior, and Middleton; but Mr. Middleton and Mr. Leycester affirm that they never accepted theirs, and Mr. Johnstone appears to have tendered his back to Mohammed Reza Cawn, who would not accept them. These bills (except Mr. Senior's for 50,000 rupees) appear to have been afterwards laid before the select committee, and no further evidence has been produced to your committee concerning them. Mr. Senior received 50,000 rupees of his, and it is stated against him in this account.

† *Third Report on the Nature, State, and Condition of the East India Company, 1772*, pp. 20—23.

and extort. That the temptations under which the servants of the company were placed, carried them to those heights of exaction which were within their reach, is far from true. They showed, on the contrary, a reserve and forbearance, which the education received in no other country, probably in the world, except their own, could have enabled men, in their extraordinary circumstances to maintain."

On the 17th of July, 1767, Lord Clive presented himself before the court of directors, upon his return from Bengal, after his brief but successful career there. The court congratulated him in terms of energetic praise, declaring that his conduct "exceeded the court's most sanguine expectations, not only in the very eminent services he had rendered the company by his wise and judicious administration of their affairs during his residence in Bengal, but also by that prudent and well-formed plan which he had suggested for the regulation of the plan of the select committee; and that it was impossible by force of words to represent to his lordship the high sense of gratitude the court entertained for the constant attention given by his lordship to the company's interests."

"On the 23rd of September, the general court, in consideration of the important services rendered to the company by Lord Clive, recommended to, and authorized, the court of directors to make a grant, under the company's seal, to his lordship, and his personal representatives, of a further term of ten years on his jaghire. The indenture granting the same was approved and engrossed in October following."

The court of directors were probably well pleased with their judgment upon Clive's services, upon receiving a despatch from the council of Bengal, conveying a good account of the company's prospects, and attributing it to the genius of Clive. The council must have been much impressed with the overwhelming ability of the great general and statesman, when, in spite of his reforms, and resolute and even haughty conduct to themselves, they could make up their minds to lavish compliments upon him in this fashion:—

"We should be wanting in the just praises of superior merit, and in gratitude for the essential services performed by Lord Clive, if we failed to acknowledge that, to the prudence and vigour of his administration, you are chiefly to ascribe the present flourishing condition of your affairs. Firm and indefatigable in his pursuits, he joined, to the weight of personal character, a zeal for your service, and a knowledge of your interests, which could not but insure success.

"We beheld a presidency divided, headstrong and licentious; a government without nerves; a treasury without money, and a service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit. We may add that, amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince and his helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty, and oppression.

"Such was the condition of this presidency and of these provinces. Your present situation need not be described. The liberal supplies to China; the state of your treasury, of your investment, of the service, and of the whole country, declare it to be the strongest contrast to what it was.

"We repeat," added the committee, "what we have already declared to Lord Clive, that no motive, no consideration, shall ever induce us to depart from that system of politics which has been recommended to us by precept and example, unless some very extraordinary event and unforeseen change should occur in the posture of your affairs."

On the 6th of April, 1770, the committee of the military fund carried into effect an agreement between Lord Clive and the company, in respect to the legacy left to his lordship by Meer Jaffier, referred to in a previous chapter. This sum amounted to £62,833. Meer Jaffier's successor added to this sum £37,700. There was also an additional sum of £24,128, due by the company for interest at eight per cent. on those amounts. Mr. Mill sneeringly observes that "to this ambiguous transaction the institution at Poplar owes its foundation." This is one of the many errors into which that able man was betrayed by the animus which he cherished towards the company. The institution at Poplar, under the designation of "Poplar Hospital," was founded for the relief of those who had belonged to the company's maritime service, or who might at any future time have belonged to it. Lord Clive's fund was for the benefit of those who had been in the military service, or who, in after times, might have served in the company's army. Poplar Hospital was instituted nearly a century before Clive was born, in 1627.

The conquests of Hyder Ali, which occasioned such tumults and alarms in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras, excited great concern in the court of directors. The following despatch to the council of Madras sets the affairs between Hyder, the Nabob of the Carnatic, and the Madras council, in their true light, and proves that the directors clearly understood how so many dangers and dis-

tresses were brought about, notwithstanding the advantageous light in which the council placed their own conduct, and their petulant accusations, against the nabob, and every one else whom their own ignorance, incapacity, and apathy involved in their abortive projects and disputes. The date of the despatch was March, 1770 :—

“In your letter to the nabob, dated the 16th July, 1767, you say that it has been your intention, ever since 1761, to embrace the first favourable opportunity of securing the several passes into the Carnatic. That you then had a favourable opportunity, because the Mahrattas had already struck a terror into Hyder's forces; therefore, you urged the nabob to exert his utmost to get this accomplished. You afterwards promised him the government of the Mysore country. Your field deputies pompously appointed him fougedar thereof; and then you accuse him of having an insatiable desire of extending his dominions. He finds himself, by following your advice, reduced, disappointed, and almost despised; and then you blame him for want of temper.

“You have attempted to explain away the value of almost everything for which you have ventured to plunge us into a war with a view to obtain. To such a degree of irresolution and disability had your ill-conduct of the war reduced you, that necessity obliged you, at last, to give Mr. Andrews, in his instructions to treat with Hyder, a very extraordinary *carte blanche*, nearly to this effect: ‘If Hyder will not relinquish places taken, we must relinquish pretensions thereto.’

“You say the nabob has the Bengal transactions always in his mind :—we wonder not at it. You have, contrary to our express injunctions, afforded but too much reason for all the country powers around you to suspect us of encroaching designs against their possessions and tranquillity, and gained no one advantage thereby.

“In the first article of your treaty with Hyder, you include, in general words, all the friends and allies of the contracting parties, ‘provided they do not become aggressors;’ but if they become aggressors, they lose the benefit of such treaty.

“Now, as by the treaty with the soubahdar, Bazalet Jung is prohibited expressly, at any time, from yielding Hyder the common formal civilities necessarily practised by country powers who are at peace with each other, we cannot conceive how Bazalet Jung can fulfil the condition by which he holds his circar, and yet continue on good terms with Hyder, as all our allies must do, if they act conformably to the first article of your treaty with him.

“By your letter to the president and council of Bengal, 21st March last, and their reply thereto, of the 31st of the same month, we find a plan has been concerted between you, for establishing a fund for military resources, by a reduction of the investments on which we had so much reason to depend. However salutary it might be to provide against future exigencies, after your investments shall have been carried to their full extent, yet it is with the utmost astonishment we see that our servants (apprised, as they are, of the obligation the company is under to pay £400,000 annually to government, exclusive of the indemnity for tea, which may be estimated at near £200,000) could entertain an idea of depriving us of the only means we could have to discharge the same, together with such dividends as the proprietors might reasonably expect from our late acquisitions, and at the same time enable us to provide for the payment of bills of exchange, or our common and necessary consignments, and the other important occasions which must indispensably be complied with.”

The reference made in the foregoing despatch to the annual payment of £400,000 a year to the British government arose from an act passed to that effect in June, 1757, compelling the company to pay that sum for permission to hold the sovereignty of their territorial possessions in India for two years. This was another instance of the flagrant manner in which the crown and parliament were ever ready to rend from the company money on any pretext. After the resources of the company had been drained in formidable wars, and territory was conceded to them, by the revenues of which they hoped to cover the expenses incurred, the crown and parliament were ready to seize as much of these revenues as possible, leaving the company to meet its onerous pecuniary obligations as best it could. The government and parliament found an opportunity for enacting this piece of rapacity, in consequence of the turbulent proceedings of the proprietors of Indian stock, who looked for the most exorbitant dividends, under allegations of the wealth of their newly-acquired provinces, which raised the envy and cupidity of the governing classes in England. They at once proclaimed that subjects should not become territorial lords, or make conquests, except for the weal of the entire nation. The company protested that some of these cessions were in payment of expenses actually incurred, and that for most, if not all, of their accessions of land they paid a rent, and, in many cases, equal to that upon which zemindars and polygars held their tenures, and fai

more surely paid. The legislature cared for none of these arguments, nor for any representations that might be made, the object of its members being to relieve themselves from taxation, and place money at the disposal of government, for its own purposes, however unjustly taken from the company. The king of England and his ministers were as ready as the Emperor of Delhi, his *soubahdars*, and their nabobs, to seize what might, under their especial circumstances, be taken. The Mahratta chiefs were not the only royal personages who took "chout" from the Indian lands. The East India Company had to pay a "chout" to the Mahrattas of their own legislature upon the lands from which they hoped to acquire a revenue. The Act compelling the company to pay £400,000 a-year expired in 1769, but was then renewed\* for five years. The act in 1767, besides exacting the tribute, compelled the company, whether it suited their business or not, to export a given value in British produce.

Closely following the renewal of the tribute act, government passed measures giving to their admirals on the coasts of India extraordinary powers, which were used stupidly and obstinately, as the reader has seen in the relation of the absurd interference of Admirals Lindsey and Harland in affairs for which they had neither intelligence, experience, nor capacity. Three commissioners sent out by the company in 1769 never reached their destination. This was one cause of the assumption of absolute supervision by the admirals, whose powers would have been held in check by the authority conferred on the commissioners with the consent of the crown.

In 1772 the directors were obliged to represent to the ministers that, in consequence of the imperfect power allowed to the company for the punishment of its servants, the directors were unable to enforce their authority; that the recent wars, which they neither desired nor occasioned, had absorbed their revenue; that the expenditure for troops and stores had increased; and that the investment upon the "out-tun," upon which they relied for means to meet their expenses, was actually suspended, from the absorption of their capital. It might have been expected that the ruinous tribute of £400,000 a-year would, under such circumstances, have been remitted; but the minister of the day showed no disposition to relax demands, or in any way favour the company. The directors and proprietors did not themselves adopt prudent courses. They had not long before declared a dividend of 6½ per cent., with the full knowledge of their embarrassments; but

\* 7 Geo. III. cap. 57.

the £400,000 demanded by government was not paid. A public opinion was rapidly created against the company and its servants. Forgotten matters were sought out, refuted accusations were revived, sins forgiven or passed lightly over by the public, were dragged to light again; "returned Indians" were ridiculed in the newspaper and comic press, caricatures of those persons as "nabobs" were exhibited in the printshops, while eager crowds approvingly gazed upon them; and, in fine, a widespread hostility existed towards the directors and their agents. Had the company paid its way and made good dividends, had new accounts of glorious victories, instead of the intelligence concerning the defeats and disgraces attending the war with Mysore arrived, the mob would have cheered, the nation would have been proud of its heroes, the company's nabobs and the holders of East India stock would have been the most respectable of citizens. A cloud came upon the face of the great luminary, and every vulgar eye looked fearlessly upon it. The very persons that had courted the patronage of the company only a short time before, when in the heyday of its power, were amongst the pamphleteers and accusers who detracted its fair and legitimate fame. Lord Clive, instead of being a popular idol, became a popular victim. The families of those whom he had deprived of place and power, when in 1765 he uprooted so many maladministrators, as well as so much maladministration, had hated him from that time, and virulently calumniated him; but the public mind was not then prepared to listen to them: now it was ready to believe as well as to hear every fiction, as well as every fault which flowed from the tongues of his vituperators. The circumstances under which his lordship had entered upon that arduous trust were forgotten, whilst the most distorted views were given of his measures. Lord Clive was not a recognised servant of the state; he derived no authority from law: he was placed over a presidency, divided, headstrong, and licentious; the treasury was without money, and the service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit: the subordinate functionaries being aware that they were only amenable to punishment within the precincts of the Mahratta ditch. Such a state of things was alone to be met and overcome by the firm and resolute line of conduct which his lordship adopted. The effect on the interests of the individuals who suffered under the well-merited rebuke their conduct had drawn upon them, led to the strong opposition evinced at the time towards his lordship,—a feeling which was fomented by some of the leading members of

the direction, who were personally indisposed towards him.\*

A select and a secret committee were moved for in parliament. The members were generally adverse to the company, and many were envious of the reputations and fortunes which had been made in India, by which persons originally obscure, towered above "old families." They were denounced in and out of parliament as upstarts, as if it were criminal of them to be either braver, wiser, or more clever than the gentry at home. Those who had grown rich by legitimate means, were the objects of as much acrimonious jealousy as those who brought home their stores of plunder; nor were the former free from calumny, any more than the latter from just censure. As many who had grown rich in India did so by plundering their own employers as well as vanquished princes and peoples—men who had dared nothing, and done nothing for the good of the company or the honour of their country, and as these were a vast majority of all that had grown rich in India, the "wealthy Indians" were as a class liable to suspicion and exposed to abuse. A perfect hurricane of obloquy and invective raged round the heads of all connected with the East India Company. How strange the fortunes of this anomalous society—one year the pride of an empire, and conquering empires, its servants statesmen and generals, whose names filled the world; in another year, not remote, none so poor as to do it homage. Its fortunes were like flashing meteors, attracting every eye, and passing swiftly on into darkness. Fitful and glorious were the episodes of its progress. Every season of renown was followed by one of obloquy. Now gorgeous Eastern kings poured forth their treasures before it, as offerings to its valour, wisdom, and power. Anon, the street-rabble mock its directors as they pass; and the most stupid country gentlemen that ever slumbered and voted upon the benches of the commons, deem themselves of too much consequence to associate with its returned ministers and soldiers, men who had

districts. The loss of human life was terrible. The Ganges rolled down day by day numbers of dead bodies—they had perished of hunger. Nothing excites so much sympathy in England as a famine. Englishmen hear of desolating wars with an excitement, which, in admiration of the results, and of the feats performed, counteracts the disgust which bloodshed would otherwise create. But in a famine there is no room for any emotions but pity and horror, unless where human instrumentalities are engaged in producing the ruin, and then the English character fires up in rage against the oppressors. This was the case at the period of which these pages treat. The tidings of famine and death from India exasperated the multitude. It was believed that the company's agents had hoarded and forestalled the rice, and in their eagerness for gain, allowed multitudes of their fellow-creatures to starve. Commensurate efforts to disabuse the public mind were not made; and perhaps no efforts would have been successful in correcting the prejudice which was greedily received. As Macaulay wrote, "These unhappy events greatly increased the unpopularity of Lord Clive. None of his acts had the smallest tendency to produce such a calamity. If the servants of the company had traded in rice, they had done so in direct contravention of the rule which he had laid down, and while in power had resolutely enforced. But in the eyes of his countrymen he was *the nabob*—the Anglo-Indian character personified; and while he was building and planting in Surrey, he was held responsible for the effects of a dry season in Bengal." Clive, as the writer last quoted also remarked, "Had to bear the double odium of his bad and his good actions, of every Indian abuse, and of every Indian reform." Clive had himself a seat in parliament; his enemies desired to have a sentence of expulsion passed upon him; they sought the confiscation of his estates, and demanded that he should be deprived of his rank in the army. Clive's conduct in the house was as intrepid as in the field. He astonished even the great Chatham by his clear statements, lucid arrangements, sound argument, manly eloquence, and bold, defiant declamation. He bore himself as haughtily and bravely to the senate of England, as to the corrupt council of Calcutta, or before the throne of the Mogul. As soon as his fortunes were on the wane, nearly all his professed friends, and even those whom he had loaded with benefits, forsook him. It was the common belief that all his property would be seized, and his person incarcerated, after being stripped of all his well-won honours. Men supposed that nothing would remain to him but his genius and his

"Made the earth to tremble,  
And did shake kingdoms."

The general feeling against the company and its servants was promoted by an event in which they had no share, except as sufferers. In the year 1770 the rains failed in Bengal. Upon them depended the rice crops—upon these the sustenance of thirty millions of human beings. A famine ensued, such as often was known in India, especially in the rice

\* Auber's *Rise and Progress of the East India Company*, vol. i. p. 338.



glory; and with these his former parasites, acquaintances, and colleagues had least sympathy. They thought more of his palace in Shropshire, his splendid mansion at Claremont, his seat in parliament, and his title, than of the renown of Arcot and Plassey, the conquest, salvation, and effective administration of an empire.

The committees examined and cross-examined him. Frank, manly, great in his humiliation as when he gave law to India, he met all inquiries with openness and truth. He justified acts for which he has been since generally condemned by writers who feared to encounter public opinion in our own times by defending him, but who were by no means certain that his conduct deserved denunciation. Some of the worst acts attributed to him, were performed under circumstances which open up questions of the nicest casuistry, and such as no man of honour and virtue, who was enlightened and experienced, would hastily decide. The committee did not conclude its inquiries the first session, but in the next having still further prosecuted them, it came to a conclusion. Before the verdict was announced, it was made apparent to all, and to the horror of those whom Lord Macaulay justly calls, "the low-minded and rancorous pack who had run him down, and were eager to worry him to death," that Clive had found one faithful and sympathising friend—his king. George III., who, with all his faults, had such signal virtues, determined to stand by his loyal and magnanimous, even if erring, servant. While yet they were questioning and cross-questioning him, the king had him installed in the Order of the Bath, with great pomp, in the chapel of Henry the Seventh. He had been before elected to this dignity, but the king chose the occasion of his persecution thus to honour him. Shortly afterwards he made him lord-lieutenant of Shropshire; and when, kissing his majesty's hand upon occasion of his appointment, he ventured to refer to his dangers and services, and sufferings, the king betrayed much emotion. His majesty gave him a private audience, and took occasion to converse intimately with him on Indian topics.

Notwithstanding the king's favour, and the transparent corruption of his accusers, Burgoyne, the chairman of the committee, became his accuser before the house. Lord Macaulay gives this man too much credit for both his parts and his honour. Clive found another friend; Wedderburn, the attorney-general, eloquently and ably defended him. Clive replied to Burgoyne and his other assailants with courage and dignity, but there was a tone of plaintiveness in his address never be-

fore known as he recounted his wrongs and his sorrows: it was the first echo of a breaking heart. The concluding paragraph of his address was striking, in which he reminded them that not only his honour, but their own, was to be decided. He then left the house.

The commons passed a series of resolutions, several of which related to Clive personally. The first declared that he had, when in command of the troops in India, received large sums of money from Meer Jaffier. The house would not affirm Burgoyne's eagerly-pressed conclusion, that they were received corruptly. A substantial motion was then made, that Clive had abused the power he possessed, and set a bad example to the public servants; the "previous question" was put and carried, the house thus refusing to entertain the question at all. Wedderburn adroitly took advantage of the temper of the house, and moved that Lord Clive had rendered great and meritorious services to his country. This was hotly debated. The truth of the proposition was evident, but if carried, Clive would go forth more triumphant than ever. It was tantamount to a vote of thanks of the house. His enemies struggled fiercely against it, speaking against time, and endeavouring to weaken the numbers on his side by exhaustion. The night wore away, and when the morning shone clear and bright upon St. Stephen's, Clive's antagonists conceiving that there was too much patriotism in the commons of England to refuse a great man so just a tribute, shrank from a decision, and the resolution was carried *nemine contradicente*. This was a terrible blow for Clive's enemies out of doors, and especially among the corrupt, cowardly, and envious clique within the circle of the directors themselves.

Clive's success brought crowds of flatterers around him, who had forsaken him when the thunder-cloud was yet dark above his head, and seemed ready to discharge its bolts upon him. He was no longer deserted. He sought the society of a few attached friends, he basked in royal favour, he surrounded himself by luxury; but, amidst all, he pined—his heart was broken. The king and the senate of his country had stood by him, but the ignorant masses were prejudiced, and regarded him with superstitious horror; the venal among the proprietary of India stock and their friends kept up an incessant attack upon him still. The company, whose favour he had fought and lived for, and for which he had conquered kingdoms, looked coldly on him; and his sensitive heart soon sank into a depression deeper than death, and from which he sinfully sought death as a relief. On the 22nd of November, 1774, he committed suicide, having just

arrived at the age of forty-nine. His enemies trod upon his ashes, chased his memory through every avenue of the past, vituperated the dead. His country slowly came to a juster appreciation of his errors and of his sins, of his greatness and of his glory.

The proceedings of the commons in connection with the inquiry which secured Clive from the power of his enemies, were harsh and stern to the company. A resolution was passed, that all territory won by the arms of the state belonged to the state, and that the East India Company had violated that principle. The company had but little aid from the state in its acquisitions, and paid for that aid vastly more than its value. The principal issue of the inquiry was "the regulation act."\* This act increased the value of the qualification demanded from a director, prescribed a new oath, and made various regulations of a purely administrative nature in connection with the directory. It decreed that Bengal should be governed by a governor-general and four councillors, each to continue in office for five years. The presidencies of Madras and Bombay were to obey the government of Bengal. The directors were to send to the secretaries of state copies of all advices, but no control was to be exercised by the ministry.

Warren Hastings was nominated in the act itself as the first governor-general of India. Lieutenant-general Clavering, the Honourable George Monson, Richard Barwell, and Philip Francis, Esqrs., the first members of the supreme council. A supreme court of judicature was to be established at Calcutta. The company's monopoly was made more stringent than ever. Another act\* granted the company £1,400,000 on loan for their relief. The nation was to forego for a time all participation in territorial profits. The dividend to proprietors was fixed at six per cent. The amount of merchandise in English commodities, to be annually exported by the company, should be to the value of £380,837. The crown was to appoint officers to conduct the civil and military affairs. The company objected to most of these provisions, and the court of proprietors refused to recognise the appointment by the crown of General Clavering to command their forces. Ultimately they gave way. The members of the supreme council, Sir Elijah Impey the new chief justice, and various other persons of distinction, embarked at St. Helen's on the 1st of April, 1774, and from this period commenced a new phase of the existence of the East India Company.

## CHAPTER LXXXII.

AFFAIRS IN BENGAL DURING THE GOVERNMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS—TERRITORY WRESTED FROM THE MOGUL AND GIVEN TO THE NABOB OF OUDE—ALLIANCE WITH THE NABOB FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE ROHILLAS—EXECUTION OF NUNDCOOMAR—VAST SUMS OBTAINED BY HASTINGS FOR THE COMPANY FROM THE NATIVE PRINCES.

It is important to glance at the relations of the British to surrounding powers, and of those powers to one another, at the period when the government of Bengal, and by consequence the government of India, devolved upon Warren Hastings.

The emperor's government was in a very feeble condition. He had been for a number of years dependent by turns upon the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and the English. Even the nizam of the Deccan, and the subahdar of Bengal, were not too feeble to give him uneasiness or offer affront to his authority. The major part of the princes of India had shaken off the imperial authority. Vassals, or officials of the supreme power, took advantage of the general decay of the Mogul power to exalt themselves by force or fraud. Mahrattas, Sikhs, Affghans, and the stronger and richer of the nabobs constantly menaced

the territories that surrounded them, over which they had themselves usurped the authority which belonged legitimately to the Delhi emperor. With such a state of affairs around them, it required on the part of the English a constant vigilance, and they were as anxious to maintain the balance of power in Hindostan, as the English at home were solicitous to maintain it in Europe. It has become the custom among politicians of a certain school in recent times to deride this principle, but it is founded in the nature of things, for if any one state gains a preponderance of power, by attacking weaker states in detail, the independence of all will be infallibly destroyed. It is therefore the interest of every other power, to limit that, which to the desire of encroachment adds the power of effecting it, unless checked by a combination of all or some of the governments,

\* 13 Geo. III. cap. 18.

\* 13 Geo. III. cap. 94.

which believe themselves endangered. The wars of the English in India had hitherto arisen mainly from the necessity of preventing any other power, native or European, from becoming so strong that the existence of the English in India would be at its mercy. When in April, 1772, Hastings became the successor of Mr. Cartier, as governor of Bengal, and virtually the governor of India, he saw around the British territory, and bordering upon those states which were contiguous to it, states and peoples who were desirous of maintaining a constant warfare, either to acquire territory or plunder. Some of the chiefs of those countries were ambitious of extended dominion, others only sought tribute or temporary spoil, while another class of chiefs were alike avaricious of immediate plunder, and permanent occupation of territory. The court of directors considered Allahabad as the great central position from which, as from a watch-tower, the English could look around upon the greedy and restless powers that prowled around. From that position, support could be rendered to the emperor, so long as it suited English policy to pay respect to his nominal power, and, under its prestige, themselves exercise the reality. From Allahabad, the territories of Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, and of the Mahrattas, Rohillas, and Jauts, could be observed. The directors had ordered the council at Bengal, previous to the arrival of Hastings, to maintain a strong brigade, at what they deemed the key position of India.

The Nabob of Oude reigned on the north of the Ganges. If an enemy, he, from his position and resources, would prove a formidable one; if an ally, and under the influence of the company, they could by his means make themselves the umpires of Hindostan. They had laid that chief under great obligations, by restoring to him his dominions, when the right of conquest, always recognised in India, enabled them to deprive him of princely dignity and power. The Rohilla chiefs were numerous, but all held their sway in detached lands in the vicinity of the emperor, and Sujah-ad-Dowlah, so as to be unable to make any movement separately, or combined without the knowledge of the king and his vizier. These Rohillas were wild chieftains, and when acting in unison could pour an army of eighty thousand men chiefly cavalry, upon any point in their vicinity. There was generally a good understanding between them and the Nabob of Oude, to whom they looked up as having a certain prescriptive authority even in Rohilcund. The Rohillas were among the best soldiers in India. As mere horsemen they

were not superior to the Mahrattas, who were probably the best light cavalry, for marching and outpost duty in the world; but they were by far their superiors in close combat, being among the best swordsmen in India. The Rohillas were also famous for their use of rockets in war. The Jats, or Jauts, extended from Agra to within a few coss of Delhi. Their revenue was about two crores of rupees, and they held three forts which were deemed by other native powers impregnable. They were also reputed to have a splendidly-appointed and numerous artillery. The country of the Mahrajah Madhu, lay south-west of Delhi. He ruled over various tribes, but his people were chiefly Rajpoots. These were proud of their lineage, as it was universally held that they were descended from kings, as their name of Rajpoots implied. They were considered the proudest and bravest warriors in India. They could not forage like the Mahrattas, they were not gigantic in stature like the Oudeans, they were not rocket-men like the Rohillas, nor artillerymen like the Jats, but they even surpassed the Rohillas as swordsmen, and were by all warriors of Hindostan accounted the bravest of the brave. It was reported that they never retreated in battle. In a war with the Jats, with whom they were often at war, their cavalry charged through the fire of ninety pieces of cannon, were thrice repulsed, each time only retiring to re-form, and at the fourth charge gained the victory. In stature, they were rather below the middle size, but their persons were finely proportioned, and their countenances handsome and expressive of dignity and courage.

The Sikhs then held the lands from Sirhind to Attock, a country exceedingly fertile; they were rapidly rising to political importance, but the distance of their settlements caused them to be placed out of the computations of the English, when reckoning upon opposing or allied forces. As, however, these Sikhs soon rose to be a powerful power, their position at this juncture is noticed. They were brave, energetic, and industrious, in the opinion of the peoples of Northern and Western India. The Mahrattas, their power, position, and policy, have been so frequently the subjects of remark in foregoing pages, that it is only necessary to say here that of all the tribes of India they were the most likely to give the English trouble, excepting, perhaps, the Mysoreans, whose importance chiefly depended upon the skill and genius of their chief. They were of kindred race with the Mahrattas, inhabiting contiguous territory, and of similar habits, military and social. The policy recommended by the court of directors was for their governors and coun-

cils to be on friendly terms, and commercial intercourse with all these nations, to avoid the incumbrance of alliances with them, either offensive or defensive, especially the former, but not to allow any of them to obtain so overwhelming a preponderance by the conquest of the rest, as to become too formidable to the English. This policy was not carried out intelligently and prudently by the councils of presidencies up to the time of Hastings. How far it was then observed will be seen from future pages.

"When Warren Hastings took his seat at the head of the council board, Bengal was governed according to the system which Clive had devised—a system which was perhaps skilfully contrived for the purpose of facilitating and concealing a great revolution, but which, when that revolution was complete and irrevocable, could produce nothing but inconvenience. There were two governments, the real and the ostensible. The supreme power belonged to the company, and was in truth the most despotic power that can be conceived. The only restraint on the English masters of the country, was that which their own justice and humanity imposed on them. There was no constitutional check on their will, and resistance to them was utterly hopeless. But though thus absolute in reality, the English had not yet assumed the style of sovereignty. They held their territory as vassals of the throne of Delhi, they raised their revenue as collectors appointed by the imperial commission; their public seal was inscribed with the imperial titles, and their mint struck only the imperial coin. There was still a Nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his country in the same relation in which Augustus stood to Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and Pepin. He lived at Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of reverence, and his name was used in public instruments. But in the government of the country he had less share than the youngest writer or cadet in the company's service. The English council which represented the company at Calcutta, was constituted on a very different plan from that which has since been adopted. At present, the governor is, as to all executive measures, absolute. He can declare war, conclude peace, appoint public functionaries, or remove them, in opposition to the unanimous wish of those who sit with him in council. They are indeed entitled to know all that is done, to discuss all that is done, to advise, to remonstrate, to send protests to England. But it is with the governor that the supreme power resides, and on him

that the whole responsibility rests. This system, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Burke, we conceive to be on the whole the best that was ever devised for the government of a country where no materials can be found for a reproductive constitution. In the time of Hastings, the governor had only one vote in council, and in case of an equal division, a casting vote. It therefore happened not unfrequently, that he was overruled on the gravest questions, and it was possible that he might be wholly excluded for years together from the real direction of public affairs. The English functionaries at Fort William, had yet paid little or no attention to the internal government of Bengal. The only branch of politics about which they much busied themselves was negotiation with the native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collection of revenue, were almost entirely neglected. We may remark that the phraseology of the civil servant still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word 'political' as synonymous with 'diplomatic.' We could name a gentleman still living who was described by the highest authority as an invaluable public servant, eminently fit to be at the head of the internal administration of a whole presidency, but unfortunately quite ignorant of all political business. The internal government of Bengal, the English rulers delegated to a great native minister who was stationed at Moorshedabad. All military affairs, and with the exception to what pertains to ceremonial, all foreign affairs, were withdrawn from his control; but the other departments of the administration were entirely confided to him. His own stipend amounted to near £100,000 sterling a year. The personal allowance of the nabob amounted to near £300,000 a year, passed through the minister's hand, and was to a great extent at his disposal. The collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the maintenance of order, were left to this high functionary; and for the exercise of this immense power, he was responsible to none but the British masters of the country."\*

The first business of importance which devolved upon Hastings, was in connection with certain instructions of the court sent out by them in August, 1771, and which arrived only ten days after he succeeded to the chair. These instructions referred to Mohammed Reza Khan, who at that time administered the revenue affairs of the soubahdar, and in part of the British. When the infant brother of the former soubahdar came to the

\* Lord Macaulay's *Essay on Warren Hastings*.

musnid, Nundcoomar, the infamous Brahmi to whom reference was made when recording the events of Mr. Vansittart's government was competitor for the post of chief minister with Mohammed Reza. The latter was preferred. The writer last quoted thus describes the result :—"Nundcoomar, stimulated at once by cupidity and malice, had been constantly attempting to hurt the reputation of his successful rival. This was not difficult. The revenues of Bengal under the administration established by Clive, did not yield such a surplus as had been anticipated by the company, for at that time the most absurd notions were entertained in England respecting the wealth of India. Palaces of porphyry, hung with the richest brocade, heaps of pearls and diamonds, vaults from which pagados and gold mohurs were measured out by the bushel filled the imagination even of men of business. Nobody seemed to be aware of what was nevertheless the truth, that India was a poorer country than countries which in Europe are reckoned poor,—than Ireland, for example, or than Portugal. It was confidently believed by lords of the treasury and members for the city, that Bengal would not only defray its own charges, but would afford an increased dividend to the proprietors of India stock, and large relief to the English finances. These absurd expectations were disappointed, and the directors, naturally enough, chose to attribute the disappointment rather to the mismanagement of Mohammed Reza Khan, than to their own ignorance of the country entrusted to their care. They were confirmed in this by the agents of Nundcoomar, for Nundcoomar had agents even in Leadenhall Street. Soon after Hastings reached Calcutta, he received a letter addressed by the court of directors, not to the council generally, but to himself in particular. He was directed to remove Mohammed Reza Khan, to arrest him with all his family, and all his partizans, and to institute a strict inquiry into the whole of the administration of the province. It was added that the governor would do well to avail himself of the assistance of Nundcoomar in the investigation. The vices of Nundcoomar were acknowledged. But even from his vices, it was said, much advantage might, at such a conjuncture be derived; and though he could not safely be trusted, it might still be proper to encourage him by hopes of reward. The governor bore no goodwill to Nundcoomar; many years before they had known each other at Moorshedabad, and then a quarrel had arisen between them, which all the authority of their superiors could hardly compose. Widely as they differed in most points, they resembled each other in this, that both were men of un-

forgiving natures. To Mohammed Reza Khan, on the other hand, Hastings had no feelings of hostility. Nevertheless, he proceeded to execute the instructions of the company with an alacrity which he never showed, except when instructions were in perfect conformity with his own views. He had wisely, as we think, determined to get rid of the system of double government in Bengal. The orders of the directors furnished him with the means for effecting his purpose, and dispensed him from the necessity of discussing the matter with his council. He took his measures with his usual vigour and dexterity. At midnight, the palace of Mohammed Reza Khan at Moorshedabad was surrounded by a battalion of sepoys. The minister was aroused from his slumber, and informed he was a prisoner. With the Mussulman's gravity he bent his head, and submitted to the will of God."

With Mohammed Reza another man of mark was arrested, Shitabroy, or Schitab Roy. His daring courage and skilful conduct at the battle of Patna, under Captain Knox, introduced him so favourably to the council of Bengal, that he had been appointed minister of revenue in Bahia, an office in reference to that province similar in character to that which was held by Mohammed Reza in reference to all the dominions of the soubahbar. This heroic and honest man was another object of hatred to the atrocious Nundcoomar, and also fell, so far, a victim to his wiles. The members of council knew nothing of these proceedings until the prisoners arrived in Calcutta, or, at all events, approached that city. Hastings acted with a secrecy and promptitude which by no means pleased the council. "The inquiry into the conduct of the minister was postponed on different pretences. He was detained in an easy confinement during many months. In the meantime the great revolution which Hastings had planned was carried into effect. The office of minister was abolished. The internal administration was transferred to the servants of the company. A system, a very imperfect system, it is true, of civil and criminal justice under English superintendence was established. The nabob was no longer to have even an ostensible share in the government, but he was still to receive a considerable annual allowance, and to be surrounded with the state of sovereignty. As he was an infant, it was necessary to provide guardians for his person and property. His person was entrusted to a lady of his father's harem, known by the name of the Munny Begum. The office of treasurer of the household was bestowed on a son of Nundcoomar named Goordas. Nundcoomar's services were wanted, yet he could

not be safely trusted with power, and Hastings thought it a master stroke of policy to reward the able and unprincipled parent, by promoting the inoffensive son.

"The revolution completed, the double government dissolved, the company installed in the full sovereignty of Bengal, Hastings had no motive to treat the late ministers with rigour. Their trial had been put off on various pleas, till the new organization was complete. They were then brought before a committee over which the governor presided. Shitabroy was speedily acquitted with honour. A formal apology was made to him for the restraint to which he had been subjected. All the Eastern marks of respect were bestowed on him. He was clothed in a robe of state, presented with jewels, and with a richly harnessed elephant, and sent back to his government at Patna. But his health had suffered by confinement; his high spirit had been cruelly wounded; and soon after his liberation he died of a broken heart.

"The innocence of Mohammed Reza Khan was not so clearly established. But the governor was not disposed to deal harshly. After a long hearing, in which Nundcoomar appeared as the accuser, and displayed both the art and the inveterate rancour which distinguished him, Hastings pronounced that the charges had not been made out, and ordered the fallen minister to be set at liberty. Nundcoomar had purposed to destroy the Mussulman administration, and to rise on its ruin. Both his malevolence and his cupidity had been disappointed. Hastings had made him a tool; had used him for the purpose of accomplishing the transfer of the government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, from native to European hands. The rival, the enemy, so long envied, so implacably persecuted, had been dismissed unhurt. The situation so long and ardently desired had been abolished. It was natural that the governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin. As yet, however, it was necessary to suppress such feelings. The time was coming when that long animosity was to end in a desperate and deadly struggle."<sup>\*</sup>

As soon as the intrigues, falsehoods, forgeries, bribes, and other villainies of Nundcoomar, had triumphed, and the company had been so far imposed upon as to suspect, arrest, and incarcerate two honest men, Nundcoomar began a new series of infamous schemes. Although a cruel and heartless villain, he had a zeal for the Brahminical religion, and was desirous of uprooting the Mohammedan influence altogether in the Bengal provinces.

<sup>\*</sup> Macaulay's review of Gleig's *Life of Hastings*.

He accordingly sent to his son, then occupying the chief place of ministerial influence in the court of the soubahdar, under the auspices of the English, letters which he desired to be copied by the Begum, the regent of the infant soubahdar, which were to be addressed as if from herself to the council of Bengal. These letters were complaints of infractions of treaty by the English, of encroachments upon the rights of the soubahdar, and containing demands for the removal of such encroachments, and the restoration of such rights. The object of Nundcoomar was to create such a feud as would rouse the English to destroy all the privileges and influence of the Mohammedan government. By this means he would humiliate a rival creed, and, probably, in the confusion which must ensue, he would acquire fresh wealth or power. At all events, he hoped for new modes of gratifying his horrid malignity against both the Mohammedans and the English. The governor discovered his intrigues, but knowing how extensive the influence which this rich and ingenious Brahmin had gained at the India-house, Hastings thought it prudent to take no step until he had informed the directors. They, instead of ordering the arrest of Nundcoomar, made no reply for a long time, and then filled their communication with unmeaning platitudes, affecting to think Nundcoomar a very bad man, but not worse than most other natives. It is impossible to account for the way in which the influence of this bad Brahmin prevailed in London, except by supposing that he had gained partisans in very high quarters by the use of money in a way which disgraced the recipients, nothing could sink Nundcoomar himself into deeper infamy than he had already reached. One of the objects contemplated by Nundcoomar by his intrigues, both in India and in England, was the destruction of Mr. Hastings, who had foiled his wiles on a previous occasion. Hastings foresaw this, and warned the directors in his despatch that he could hope for no security, and Bengal for no quiet, while any heed was given to the representations of Nundcoomar, either concerning the council, the soubahdar, particular officers in the service of either, the politics of the native princes, or the condition of the country. While the governor's despatch was on its way, other events transpired of much importance in their influence upon the future.

The Mahrattas exercised a dangerous influence over the weak Mogul, and so active were their raids that they became the tormentors of all India. The vizier besought the aid of the English. The king summoned the vizier to Delhi; the latter, having no reliance upon the monarch's steadiness, and fearing that his

majesty would, perhaps, make over some of the Oude territory to the marauders, refused to go. The Mahrattas were preparing an invasion of Rohilcund, which would bring them upon the confines of the nabob's own dominions, and endanger their independence. He also feared, or affected to fear, that the Rohillas, to save themselves, might unite with the Mahrattas against him. He resolved to open a negotiation with the Rohillas, and besought the English general at Allahabad, Sir Robert Barker, to accompany him. The council, hoping for peace through Barker's intervention, gave their consent. The main object of the nabob was, however, soon shown to be to extort some portion of Rohilcund, and he hoped the presence of the English general would so alarm the chiefs as to cause them to accede to his wishes. They consented on condition that he would aid Zabita Khan, the Rohilla chief, then at Succurtaul, guarding the fords of the Ganges against the approach of the Mahrattas, who were assisted by the king, as the Mogul emperor was at this time most frequently called. While these negotiations went forward Madajee Scindiah, the Mahratta chief, forced the passage of the Ganges with bravery equal, and skill superior, to that displayed by the Rohillas. Zabita Khan fled; Scindiah pursued the flying Rohillas to the very heart of Rohilcund. The vizier was obliged to open negotiations with the conquerors, and such were his fears that he would have submitted to the most abject terms but for the presence of General Barker. The mutinous disposition of the nabob's troops, partly from irregular pay, and partly from sympathy with whatever cause the Mogul espoused, unmanned the nabob. By the councils of the English general, the nabob put his frontier in a good state of defence, while the general ordered the first brigade of the English army, then at Patna, to cross the Caramnassa, passing the bounds of the company's territories. The council were displeased because they had not been consulted, for which step there was no time, as the Mahrattas were quick of foot and hand. The council were also angry at the expense incurred without any agreement with the nabob to refund it.

The Mahrattas had no intention of waiting upon the slow movements of the English. They plundered Rohilcund, and retired, as usual, laden with booty. The Rohilla chiefs had, on the whole, behaved badly, either surrendering to Scindiah, or seeking refuge in the north. They then entered into a convention with the nabob that, upon paying to him forty lacs of rupees, he would aid in defending *their territory*. The Mahrattas characteristically offered to him a portion of the

Rohilla lands nearest to his own, if he would only see that the chout, or tribute, was regularly paid to them. They announced, at the same time, their intention to appropriate to themselves lands formerly conceded by the Rohillas to the king. In fact, matters assumed the aspect of a convention between the vizier and the Mahrattas, to partition Rohilcund, each seizing a portion. The Mahrattas had at this time broken all their agreements with the king, and were rapidly despoiling him, while professing to uphold the dignity of his name. They had even forced from him a sumnid for the district of Meerut. The king endeavoured to betray them to the vizier and the English, and while doing so betrayed these to the very power from which he besought his old allies to save him. The Rohillas and the vizier made at last a defensive league. The Mahrattas no sooner heard of it than they marched against the confederates, making ruinous demands from Sujah-ad-Dowlah.

The vizier besought the company's interposition, and Hastings wrote to the Mahratta chiefs, showing them that they were making aggressions upon an ally. The first brigade of the British army advanced to the headquarters of the nabob. The king, who had confederated himself with the Mahrattas, now unaccountably opposed them, drew on a general battle, and, as every one concerned foresaw, incurred a total defeat. He was at the mercy of these banditti. The Mahrattas attacked the Jats next, who, being betrayed by an Englishman in their service, named Mad-dox, were as unsuccessful as the Rohillas had been. Colonel Champion and fresh forces joined the vizier, who undertook to defray their charges while employed in his defence. The Mahrattas had obtained grants of Corah and part of Allahabad from the vizier, under the menaces they held out. The English had conferred these districts upon him, they reoccupied them. It was now evident that the nabob's territory alone stood between the Mahrattas and the company's provinces, and that the time had arrived when some definite and permanent means for his defence against these marauders must be made. The nabob sought for an interview with Hastings, which he granted with the advice of the council. The council placed no restraint upon the liberty of the president as to his negotiations, except that Sujah-ad-Dowlah must bear the expenses of troops sent to defend him, and that as the king had committed himself as an instrument in the hands of the Mahrattas, their engagements with him should terminate. The council, however, would reopen with him fresh negotiations, upon new

conditions, one of which was that the tribute of twenty-six lacs of rupees from Bengal and Bahar should be surrendered.

Mr. Hastings, during his journey to Oude, requested the king to send some person to negotiate with him. He took no notice of the president's despatches, but sent menacing demands for the payment of his tribute, and subjection to his authority, which was nothing less than subjection to the Mahrattas. "Mr. Hastings reached Benares on the 19th of August, and, on the 7th of September, concluded a final treaty with the vizier, by which the districts of Corah and Allahabad were ceded to him, on condition of his paying fifty lacs of rupees to the company; twenty in ready money, and the remaining thirty lacs in two years, in two equal payments; and defraying the charges on account of any of the company's forces which he might require, the same being fixed at two lacs ten thousand per month for a brigade. The vizier, at the instance of Mr. Hastings, renewed with Cheyte Sing the engagements made with his father Bulwunt Sing, in 1764, excepting the additional tribute of two and a half lacs of rupees, to which Cheyte Sing had agreed on his accession to the Raj, in 1770. Application was again made to the vizier for the dismissal of M. Gentil, although Mr. Hastings was of opinion that 'the man' had acquired importance from the notice taken of him, rather than from his real power to effect our interests. It was arranged that a resident should be appointed to the court of the vizier from the presidency. The vizier left Benares the 10th September, on which day Mr. Hastings departed for Chunar, where he fixed the boundary of the lands appertaining to the fort. He then proceeded to Patna, for the purpose of acquiring information respecting the saltpetre manufactories; and resumed his seat at the board on the 4th of October, when he submitted a detailed report of his proceedings, and adverted to what had passed between the vizier and himself, as to the appointment of a resident at the court of Oude, from the governor in council."

The council were pleased with the arrangements, and empowered Mr. Hastings to appoint a resident at the court of Oude, to hold communications only with himself, and to be dismissed at his pleasure.

The English general, Sir Robert Barker, caused much trouble and anxiety to the governor and council, by making it a point of honour to resist all directions given him by civil servants. This conduct was unwarrantable, for, although the civil officers gave him directions what to do, they left it entirely to his own judgment as to the mode of performance.

When the Mahrattas were induced to withdraw from Rohilcund, it was upon condition that the Rohilla chiefs should pay by instalments forty lacs of rupees, and that the nabob guaranteed the payment. He did so upon receiving the bond of the chief sirdar, who was himself guaranteed by the confederated sirdars. They never paid their quota. The chief paid to the nabob five lacs instead of forty, and he paid none at all to the Mahrattas.

On the 18th of November, 1773, the council received a letter from the vizier, in which he complained of the non-payment by the Rohillas of the money for which he had given a guarantee to the Mahrattas, while the chiefs of Rohilcund were themselves invading the territories of the Mahrattas in the Doab, which would, of course, bring these marauders back again, to the danger of the nabob's own dominions, and with imperative demands for the payment of the forty lacs. The nabob's proposal, under these circumstances, was brief and pertinent:—"On condition of the entire expulsion of the Rohillas, I will pay to the company the sum of forty lacs of rupees in ready money, whenever I shall discharge the English troops; and until the expulsion of the Rohillas shall be effected, I will pay the expenses of the English troops; that is to say, I will pay them the sum of 2,10,000 monthly." This demand excited protracted discussions at Calcutta; but, at last, Colonel Champion's brigade was ordered to advance and assist the vizier. The policy of the council was, that it had become absolutely necessary to strengthen Oude, as a barrier against the Mahrattas, and that the Rohillas, fearing the vizier more than they did those more distant freebooters, would be more likely to join them in plundering his territory, to the danger of Bengal, and involving the English in expensive operations of defence.

Champion's army and that of the nabob encountered the Rohillas on the 22nd of April, 1774, when a sanguinary battle was fought. In personal appearance the people of Oude were then, as they are now, the finest and most soldier-like in India. Their average stature is far superior to that of the English, as well as of every other race in India to the frontier hills of Afghanistan. Their courage, however, never bore any proportion to their gigantic appearance—Rohillas, Rajpoots, Jats, and other races, much lower in stature, having always proved superior to them in the field. Champion soon found that the Oudeans and their ruler were cowards together; they fled from the field, leaving the English to maintain unaided a conflict with desperate men in overwhelming numbers. Victory decided for



the English, chiefly through their artillery, the Rohillas again and again charging the guns with desperate valour, attacking the English on both flanks, which their superior numbers enabled them to do with prospect of advantage, while such a fire was directed upon the British front as might distract attention from the attacks upon the flanks. The chief sirdar, Hafiz Rhamet, was slain, also one of his sons, after behaving with magnanimous heroism. When the battle was over, the nabob and his cowardly followers appeared on the field, to plunder the fallen and assassinate the dying.

According to Mr. Mill, and Lord Macaulay, who follows Mr. Mill slavishly in his reviews of the memoirs of Clive and Hastings, the utmost cruelty was perpetrated upon the people of Rohilcund, and upon the family of the fallen chief. The statements of Mill appear to have been based upon the communications of Colonel Champion to the council. That gallant soldier, scorning the cowardly Oudeans, and admiring the chivalry of the Rohillas, was ready, without sufficient evidence, to make such representations as unauthenticated reports brought him. The council replied to his communications, directing him to protect the conquered, and calling for proofs of his allegations: these were never given. The statements of Mill, and the glowing pictures portrayed by Lord Macaulay, representing British troops as partaking of the cruelties perpetrated, or, at least, standing by reluctant witnesses of burning villages, plundered houses, and ravished women, are denied by writers far better acquainted with the history of the period than either Mr. Mill or his lordship. The former quotes Colonel Champion as stating in his despatches instances of cruelty and plunder witnessed by the whole army. The colonel, no doubt, did witness such acts, and would have witnessed many more, and worse in their character, if it were not for the moral pressure exercised by him against the vizier's misdeeds; but many of the colonel's statements were made upon hearsay, and were false. Mr. Hastings was denounced by Mill for justifying or palliating such deeds by the custom of oriental warfare, and the admission that even English armies in India had previously, in that very country, misconducted themselves in a manner similar to that of the vizier's army: yet these statements of Mr. Hastings were true, and the real explanation of what did occur, stripped of the false representations which Mill too readily credited, as did Colonel Champion himself. Professor Wilson's comment upon Mill's statements is as follows:—"The words 'extermination,' 'extirpation,' and the like,

although found in the correspondence, are here [in Mill] put forward so as to convey erroneous impressions. The only extirpation proposed was that of the power of one or two Rohilla chiefs. It was not a war against the people, but against a few military adventurers who had gained their possessions by the sword, who were constantly at war with their neighbours and with each other, and whose forcible suppression was the legitimate object of the King of Delhi, or the Nabob of Oude. So far was the contest from being national, that the mass of the population of Rohilcund consisted of Hindoos, hostile both in religion and policy to their Affghan rules, to whom the name Rohillas is somewhat incorrectly confined. Even amongst the Affghans, however, there was but a partial combination, and several of the sirdars joined the vizier. One of the many pamphlets put forth by the virulent enemies of Hastings (*Origin and authentic narrative of the present Mahratta and late Rohilla War*. Lond. 1781), unblushingly affirms that 500,000 families of husbandmen and artists had been driven across the Jumna, and that the Rohilla provinces were a barren and uninhabited waste. An equally false representation is cited from the parliamentary register, 1781, by Hamilton, according to whom, the numbers expelled were about 17,000 or 18,000 men with their families, none being included in the spirit of the treaty, *excepting such as were actually found in arms*. The Hindoo inhabitants, consisting of about 700,000, were no otherwise affected by it than experiencing a change of masters, to which they had been frequently accustomed.\* These statements all proceeded from personal hostility to Hastings, and had no foundation in genuine humanity. It is evident that the son of Hafiz, although the most grievous consequence of hostilities was his father's death, entertains no suspicion that there was anything atrocious in the transaction, and he expresses no personal resentment towards the chief actors in the revolution."†

M. Auber‡ notices the allegations put forth by Mill, and repeated by Macaulay, in the following terms:—

"Accounts of severity of conduct, on the part of the vizier, towards the family of Hafiz Rhamet, reaching the council, they intimated to Colonel Champion that it had been an invariable maxim in the policy of the company's governments, in the execution of any enter-

\* Hamilton's *History of the Rohilla Affghans*, p. 268.

† Wilson's notes on Mill's *British India*, book v. chap. i. pp. 403, 404.

‡ Auber's *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. vii. pp. 407—409.

prises undertaken in behalf of their allies, to interpose their protection in favour of the conquered princes, for the security of their lives and honour: that it was the intention of the council to adhere to a maxim which had so greatly contributed to the reputation of the British name, and to perform what might be incumbent on them on the occasion in question. They accordingly desired to be informed of the nature and instances of the ill-treatment alluded to, in order that they might judge of the measures proper to be adopted. In the interim, the commander-in-chief was to urge such remonstrances to the vizier as occasion might require; and to point out how entirely abhorrent the council were to every species of inhumanity. No instances were, however, adduced in proof of the allegations of cruelty, which appeared to have been made upon general rumour."

M. Auber adds, in reference to these transactions:—

"The vizier having intimated to Colonel Champion, in the month of May, that he had no further occasion for the services of the troops in the field before the rains, preparations were made to canton them at Bareilly. The whole of the country lately possessed by Hafiz Rhamet, with Ouly and Bessouly, belonging to the son of Dudney Cawn, had been acquired by the vizier."

The following was the letter of the council, making known these events to the directors:

"Every circumstance that could possibly favour this enterprise, by an uncommon combination of political considerations and fortuitous events, operated in support of the measure.

"1st. Justice to the vizier for the aggravated breach of treaty in the Rohilla chiefs.

"2nd. The honour of the company, pledged implicitly by General Barker's attestation for the accomplishment of this treaty, and which, added to their alliance with the vizier, engaged us to see redress obtained for the perfidy of the Rohillas.

"3rd. The completion of the line of defence of the vizier's dominions, by extending his boundary to the natural barrier formed by the northern chain of hills and the Ganges and their junction.

"4th. The acquisition of forty lacs of rupees to the company, and of so much specie added to the exhausted currency of these provinces.

"5th. The subsidy of two lacs ten thousand rupees per month, for defraying the charges of one-third of our army employed with the vizier.

"6th. The urgent and recent orders of the company for reducing charges, and procuring the means to discharge the heavy debt at

interest, heightened by the advices of their great distresses at home.

"7th. The absence of the Mahrattas from Hindostan, which left an open field for carrying the proposed plan into execution.

"8th, and lastly. The intestine divisions and dissensions in their state, which, by engaging them fully at home, would prevent interruptions from their incursions, and leave a moral certainty of success to the enterprise.

"These were the inducements which determined us to adopt this new plan of conduct; in opposition to which, one powerful objection, and only one, occurred, namely, the personal hazard we ran, in undertaking so uncommon a measure without positive instructions, at our own risk, with the eyes of the whole nation on the affairs of the company, and the passions and prejudices of almost every man in England inflamed against the conduct of the company, and the characters of their servants. Notwithstanding which, we yielded to the strong necessity impressed upon us by the inducements abovementioned, in spite of the suggestions and the checks of self-interest, which set continually before our eyes the dread of forfeiting the favour of our employers and becoming the objects of popular invective, and made us involuntarily rejoice at every change in the vizier's advices, which protracted the execution of the measure. At length, however, his resolution coinciding with our opinions, the enterprise was undertaken; and, if our intelligence be confirmed, it is now finally closed, with that success which we had foreseen from the beginning. We shall then again return to the state of peace from which we emerged, when we first engaged in the Rohilla expedition, with the actual possession or acknowledged right (which the power of this government can amply and effectually assert) of near seventy lacs of rupees, acquired by the monthly subsidy and the stipulation: and it rests with you to pass the ultimate judgment on our conduct."\*

M. Auber, referring to this communication, says:—

"This letter had scarcely been dispatched, when the troops were again called into the field, in consequence of intelligence that matters were accommodated between the Mahratta chieftains. The vizier was, therefore, anxious to complete the total reduction of the Rohillas without delay, by which the designs of the king and the Mahrattas, to be executed after the rains, would be defeated. The king had taken into his service Shimroo, the notorious assassin of the unfortunate prisoners at Patna."

\* Letter to Court, 17th of October, 1774.

The vizier had been punctual in his payments of the monthly subsidy for the brigade, and had given an assignment on his treasury for the fifteen lacs due by the treaty of September, 1773,\* for the second payment on account of the cession of Corah and Allahabad.

Colonel Champion, under all the circumstances, consented to advance, and soon quelled all disturbances, finally and completely establishing the authority of the nabob.

The king and the vizier entered into negotiations, by which they satisfied or pretended to satisfy one another. Colonel Champion was directed by the council to be present, to abstain from committing the British to any new engagements, and to watch proceedings generally. This he did with vigilance and suspicion, having been disposed to attribute too much importance to the petty intrigues of Indian courts. The colonel considered the ally of the company to be just as dangerous as their enemies.

When peace was established, Hastings directed his attention to the revenue. He abolished the office of supervisor, and established that of collector, a name which has ever since continued in the revenue system of India. Means were taken to guard against the trickery and frauds of the native occupiers of land, and at the same time to remove all hardships and inequalities, as far as it was possible to do so, without destroying those customs of the country to which the natives so tenaciously clung, even to their own disadvantage. The administration of justice next claimed the care of the indefatigable governor, whose keen and polished intellect penetrated all subjects. The information given by him to the directors on the laws, usages, and various offices and officers connected with the administration of law, was more accurate and complete than the court of directors had ever before received. The suppression of Dacoittee offered many difficulties, but the governor persevered with such skill and energy to accomplish it, that a great effect was produced, and a commensurate relief afforded to both people and government.

On the 11th of May, 1774, a measure abolishing the right to buy or sell slaves who had not previously been known as such, was carried into effect. The object was to prevent child-stealing for the purposes of slavery, a practice which the Dutch and French, more especially the latter, had encouraged.

Mr. Halked, of the civil service, made an English translation of the Mohammedan and Hindoo codes of laws. This book was published in March, 1775, dedicated to Mr. Hast-

\* Vide printed Treaties.

ings, to whom the translator attributed the original plan, and the result of its execution.

Peace was not permitted to continue long in India. The restlessness of the native chiefs led them perpetually to make war upon one another, and the English were mixed up with so many of them by treaties, or agreements which had all the effect of regular treaties, that it was impossible to keep the sword sheathed. Bhotan, a mountainous district on the borders of Bengal (described in the geographical portion of this work), made war upon Cooch Bahar. The Cooch rajah claimed the protection of the English, offering to place his territory under the dominion of the Bengal government, and to pay to it half the revenues, if he were preserved in the peaceful enjoyment of the remainder, without being exposed to the depredations of his neighbours. As Cooch Bahar ranged along the British district of Rungpore, the governor acceded to the proposal. The "Deb rajah," at the head of the Bhotans, was ravaging the country of Cooch Bahar with fire and sword, never supposing that the English would interfere. The operations of a few British troops threw his highness into alarm, and the consternation spread to the remotest recesses of Bhotan. The sovereign implored the interposition of Teshoo Lama,\* who addressed to Mr. Hastings the most remarkable communication probably ever presented by any native power in India to a representative of England. The document is so curious, that it cannot fail to interest the reader.

"The affairs of this quarter in every respect flourish, and I am night and day employed for the increase of your happiness and prosperity. Having been informed by travellers from your quarter of your exalted fame and reputation, my heart, like the blossom of spring, abounds with gaiety, gladness, and joy. Praise! that the star of your fortune is in its ascension—praise! that happiness and ease are the surrounding attendants of myself and family. Neither to molest or persecute is my aim: it is even the characteristic of my sect to deprive ourselves of the necessary refreshments of sleep, should an injury be done to a single individual. But in justice and humanity I am informed you surpass us. May you ever adorn the seat of justice and power, that mankind may, under the shadow of your bosom, enjoy the blessings of happiness and ease! By your favour I am the rajah and lama of this country, and rule over numbers of subjects, a particular with which you have no

\* Accounts of the Lamas, their religion, and the state of Thibet will be found in the geographical portion of this work, which the reader will do well to consult when perusing the historical chapters.

doubt been acquainted by travellers from these parts. I have been repeatedly informed that you have been engaged in hostilities against the Dah Terrea, to which, it is said, the dah's own criminal conduct in committing ravages and other outrages on your frontiers, has given rise. As he is of a rude and ignorant race, past times are not destitute of instances of the like misconduct which his own avarice tempted him to commit: it is not unlikely that he has now resumed those instances, and the ravages and plunder which he may have committed on the skirts of the Bengal and Bahar provinces have given you provocation to send your vindictive army against him; however, his party has been defeated; many of his people have been killed, three forts have been wrested from him, and he has met with the punishment he deserved, and it is as evident as the sun, your army has been victorious; and that if you had been desirous of it, you might in the space of two days have entirely extirpated him, for he had not power to resist your efforts. But I now take upon me to be his mediator, and to represent to you, that as the said Dah Terrea is dependant upon the Dalee Lama, who rules this country with unlimited sway (but on account of his being in his minority, the charge of the government and administration for the present is committed to me), should you persist in offering further molestation to the dah's country, it will irritate both the Lama and all his subjects against you. Therefore, from a regard to our religion and customs, I request you will cease all hostilities against him, and in doing this you will confer the greatest favour and friendship upon me. I have reprimanded the dah for his past conduct, and I have admonished

him to desist from his evil practices in future, and to be submissive to you in all matters. I am persuaded that he will conform to the advice which I have given him, and it will be necessary that you treat him with compassion. As to my part, I am but a fakeer, and it is the custom of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of mankind and the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, entreat that you cease all hostilities against the dah in future. It would be needless to add to the length of this letter, as the bearer of it, who is a Goseign, will represent to you all particulars, and it is hoped that you will comply therewith. In this country worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you. Having a few things in hand I send them to you by way of remembrance, and I hope for your acceptance of them."

A treaty, consisting of ten articles, was agreed to on the 25th of April. Some lands were restored to the Deb Rajah, who was to pay to the company for the possession of the Chitta Cotta province a tribute of five Tauzan horses: the Bhotan merchants were allowed to send a caravan annually to Rungpore. Mr. Hastings saw that the communication from the Teshoo Lama opened an opportunity for effecting regular intercourse between Thibet and Bengal, and he proposed that Mr. Bogle be sent by the council to the Lama, with a letter and presents, accompanied by a sample of goods, with the view of ascertaining which might be made objects of commerce. The council concurred in the views of the president. Mr. Hamilton accompanied Mr. Bogle as assistant-surgeon.

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL UNDER WARREN HASTINGS AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA, TO THE DEATH OF GENERAL CLAVERING—ARRIVAL OF MEMBERS OF THE NEW COUNCIL—DISPUTES BETWEEN THE MAJORITY OF THE COUNCIL AND THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL—A CONSPIRACY AGAINST HASTINGS, AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS CONTRIVED BY NUNDCOOMAR—THE BRAHMIN CONVICTED OF FORGERY, AND HANGED BY SENTENCE OF THE SUPREME COURT—MARRIAGE OF HASTINGS—DEATH OF MON-  
SON AND CLAVERING LEAVING HASTINGS IN A MAJORITY AT THE COUNCIL BOARD.

In the last chapter on home events connected with the company, it was related that in consequence of parliamentary interposition various new regulations were made for the government of India, and that among these, Mr. Hastings, president of the council of Bengal, and governor of the Bengal provinces, was to be designated governor-general of

India, that the other presidencies and provinces should, to a certain extent, be subjected to the governor-general's superintendence; and certain new councillors were nominated, who proceeded to Bengal. On the 19th of October, 1774, the new council, with the exception of Mr. Barwell, who was in the country, arrived at Calcutta, and were received

with public honours. Next day a council was held. Proclamation was ordered, announcing that the new government, under "the regulation act," began that day. Various new and useful regulations were made under the auspices of the new council; among these one was especially beneficial,—the establishment of a board of trade, by which commercial affairs should be exclusively the object of attention.

The decrees upon which the directors and the royal government had agreed, were placed before the governor-general and council, which may be thus summed up:—A commission was issued to the governor-general, constituting him governor and commander-in-chief of the fortress and garrison of Fort William and town of Calcutta.\* Lieutenant-general Clavering was granted a commission as commander-in-chief of all the company's forces in India. If the governor-general and council should at any time think proper to issue orders, under their hands, or by their secretary, to any officer in the army, thereby suspending or superseding the specific commands of the governor-general or military commander-in-chief, such orders were to be implicitly obeyed. The military commander-in-chief was not to leave Bengal without the sanction of the governor-general and council. Whenever the commander-in-chief in India was at either of the other presidencies, he was to have a seat as second in council; but to vote only on political and military affairs. His allowances, as commander-in-chief, were fixed at £6,000 per annum, and his salary, as a member of council, at £10,000 per annum. Copies of the commission to Mr. Hastings and to Lieutenant-general Clavering, and of the court's instructions, were to be forthwith published in general orders at Fort William. In addition to the foregoing instructions, a general letter was addressed to the governor-general and council. The measures of the president regarding Cooch Behar were approved, although the court by no means departed from the rule laid down, of confining their views to the possessions thus acquired. Whenever General Clavering could be spared from his duties in Bengal, he was to proceed to Madras and Bombay, to review the troops, and to make a strict examination into the state of the company's armies at each presidency, and to assist the presidents and councils in forming such regulations as might be necessary for rendering the forces respectable. A revision of the coinage was to be made in Bengal, a treatise thereon, by Sir James Stuart, Bart., being forwarded for the infor-

mation of the council.\* At the instance of Mr. Hastings, the council adjourned from Thursday, the 20th October, until the Monday following, on which day, Mr. Barwell having arrived at the presidency, the oaths of office were administered, and the commissions to the governor-general and the commander-in-chief promulgated. In order to place the leading branches of the public affairs before the council, a minute was delivered in by Mr. Hastings, reviewing the revenue system and the political state of the provinces.

Discussions arose upon the minute of Mr. Hastings, which threatened to assume important consequences, so far did the views of the new council and the governor-general diverge.

Upon discussion of the treaty of Benares, and the Rohilla war, General Clavering called for the original correspondence between the resident at the vizier's court and the president. Mr. Hastings objected to produce private correspondence, but was ready to lay public documents before the council. A majority resolved that *all* ought to be produced. He maintained that the usage of the Bengal government was in harmony with his views, that he was willing in future transactions to be guided by the council, but would not submit to an *ex post facto* law, suddenly formed. The council ordered the agent down to Calcutta, and to bring the whole correspondence with him, Colonel Champion to act as political agent in the meantime. General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, were determined to restrain the power of the governor, and to assume among themselves the authority. Mr. Francis was much the most intellectual person of the three new councillors; he was a man of keen discrimination, of a critical habit, insubordinate, ambitious, persevering, tenacious, bitter, and unrelenting. He was in some respects well fitted to cope with Mr. Hastings in the intellectual arena where they met. This will be readily believed by all readers, when they recognise in Mr. Francis the celebrated "Junius," whose political writings had previously made such a noise in the world, and around the authorship of which so much mystery and interest has remained to the present day. The light of recent investigations leaves no possibility of doubt that Mr. Philip Francis, the refractory colleague of Hastings in the council of Bengal, was the "Junius" whose

\* The object of this was to prevent disputes about authority with the commander-in-chief.

\* This gentleman composed, for the use of the East India Company, in 1772, a work entitled, *The Principles of Money applied to the present State of Bengal*. It was printed, and the court presented him with a ring, of one hundred guineas value, with a suitable inscription, in testimony of their sense of this service. M. Auber, vol. i. p. 449.

political criticism, satire, and invective have excited so large an amount of political and literary interest.

Clavering, Monson, and Francis perpetually complained to the directors that their dignity and consequence had not been considered sufficiently by Mr. Hastings. Mr. Barwell sided with the governor-general. Each party sent home its own reports. Clavering, Monson, and Francis sought to grasp the government, and make the governor-general a mere puppet in their hands. The replies of Hastings to their complaints are admirable specimens of logical and eloquent writing, and are pervaded by a manliness and dignity which could not have failed to impress the directors.

While these painful discussions rent the council, and this adverse correspondence concerning the vizier and the policy which had been pursued towards him was going on, that remarkable person died, and his son, under the title of Asoff-ul-Dowlah, succeeded to Oude and its dependencies. Previous to his death the vizier had paid fifteen out of the forty lacs of rupees stipulated.

The council considered that the treaty with Oude terminated with the nabob's life, and proposed another treaty with his successor, of a purely defensive nature. The council contrived to make the new treaty a means of fresh acquisitions, and accordingly the zemindaree of Benares was made over to them, without being encumbered with any new engagements or loading them with additional expenses. The revenues amounted to rupees 1,23,72,656, and were to be paid by the Rajah Cheyte Sing in monthly payments, as a net tribute, without rendering any accounts of his collections, or being allowed to enter any claim for deductions. The nabob agreed to pay 2,60,000 rupees per month for a brigade of the company's troops, which was an addition of half a lac to the former allowance. The important point was gained of his consenting to dismiss all foreigners from his service, and his engaging to deliver up Cossim Ally Cawn, and Shimroo, the assassin of the English at Patna, should they ever fall into his hands. The provinces of Corah and Allahabad were to remain with the nabob.\* Instructions were sent to Colonel Galliez to continue with the brigade in the territories of Oude for their defence, and for that of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, should the nabob require it. Hostilities had for some time been carried on between Nudjiff Cawn, the Rajpoots, and Jats, and they had alternately sought an alliance with the nabob in support of their

respective views. The latter, jealous of Nudjiff Cawn, had evinced a disposition to join his opponents. The grand object of the council was to preserve a good understanding between the vizier and the other neighbouring powers, for which purpose Mr. Bristow was ordered to take the necessary measures, and at the same time to urge the nabob to attend to the good government and improvement of his dominions.

Conflicts and treaties appeared now to have been terminated so far as Oude was concerned, although the young nabob had manifested an indisposition to concede much that the English required, but he chiefly showed dislike to their insisting upon good government in Oude as absolutely essential to the peace of the English territory and the alliance. If Oude were ill-governed, insurrections in Oude proper, and in the Rohilla country, would break out, and Jats, Rajpoots, Mahirattas, and Affghans, were all ready to swoop down upon any country of Hindostan that was torn by internal strife. The presence of these marauding hordes on the confines of Bengal caused expense and alarm to the English; it was, therefore, vital to them that Oude should be so governed as to leave no apprehension of a border warfare. His majesty had a firm conviction that he might do as he pleased with his own, without being careful for the consequences to his neighbours; and he submitted with a surly and dubious acquiescence to the terms imposed upon him.

When the affairs of Oude were brought to what appeared to be a happy termination, the opinion of the directors upon past events reached Calcutta. They agreed in the main with Mr. Hastings, and where they differed gave him credit for doing what he did with the best intentions. On some points they agreed with his opponents, but not at all with the spirit and temper of the opposition. Mr. Barwell's view, urged from the moment of his arrival in India, that the new council had nothing to do with past transactions, the responsibility of which rested with Mr. Hastings and the former administration, was evidently that which the directors espoused; but they so framed their despatch as to induce, if possible, the two parties to coalesce for the common good. Had the directors known the men of whom the council was composed, they would never have expected compliance with any such instructions. Hastings was a man of undoubted genius; he was conciliatory, and had much self-control. All this the directors knew, and hoped the best from that knowledge. During Mr. Vansittart's government he was in opposition, as has been shown, to

\* The treaty was concluded by Mr. Bristow, whose conduct on the occasion was highly applauded by the supreme government.

the majority of the Bengal council; but while discharging his duty faithfully and firmly, he bore himself in a manner so gentlemanly and urbane as to deprive the council of any opportunity of showing ill-will personally to him,—even the vehement and unabashed Johnstone, the worst of as bad a set of men as ever administered the government of an English dependency, treated Hastings with decorum. During the time Mr. Hastings had served on the Madras council, the follies of that body were innumerable. Unable to control or influence them, he took little part in the active politics of the period, and devoted himself to the prosecution of the trade of the company, and with such success as to ensure his promotion to Bengal. But the directors did not know that with the *suaviter in modo*, Hastings united in so extraordinary a degree the *fortiter in re*. They had no experience of his indomitable will and strenuous persistence of purpose in all dangers and against all odds. It was their belief that the good manners, graceful language, accomplished scholarship, and gentle self-respect of the governor-general, added to the influence of his high position, would gradually dissolve a hostile party, and attach it to himself.

Mr. Barwell had long resided in India, and was a valuable servant, of industrious habits, and great experience in the company's business. The company reposed confidence in his integrity, propriety of conduct, and peaceful, co-operative disposition. Clavering they did not know. He was a man of intense prejudices, to which he was always ready to sacrifice the public interests. A king's officer, he disdained the military service of the company, although more than once he was constrained to compliment the talent displayed by its officers. He and Colonel Monson went out to India determined to thwart the company's civil servants, especially the governor-general, believing that by so doing they would be sustained by public prejudice in England, and by the ill-will to the company then prevailing in the House of Commons. There was a large party of politicians in England desirous of destroying the company, and handing over to government their territorial possessions. These were the leading party men who sought the power and patronage which would accrue to their parties respectively, if the dominions of the company were governed under the immediate control of the English ministry. Francis was turbulent tyrant, haughty, arrogant, and malignant. The directors had no knowledge of his peculiar temperament, nor of his peculiar parts. Lord Macaulay exhibits the disappointed and bitter spirit of Francis at that time, and ex-

plains the circumstantial causes of the peculiar intensity of the bitterness and discontent he manifested, in a characteristic manner, and with accurate statements, in the following terms: "It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country, which had been so powerfully stirred by his eloquence. Everything had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater part of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to 'Junius.' His opinions on domestic affairs separated him from the ministry; his opinions on colonial affairs from the opposition. Under such circumstances he had thrown down his pen in misanthropical despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the 19th of January, 1773. In that letter he declared that he must be an idiot to write again; that he had meant well by the cause and the public; that both were given up; that there were not ten men who would act together on any question. 'But it is all alike,' he added, 'vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know off; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity.' These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal."

The directors, although they did not know the temper and talent of Francis, knew enough of his antecedents to be aware that no post would satisfy his ambition, no courtesy conciliate his temper, and that his combative spirit would eke out a cause of quarrel in any affairs of which he had only in part the management. He had served in various departments of state, in all cleverly, and in none with satisfaction to those who employed him.

One of the first proofs afforded of how little the advice of the directors prevailed with the new members of council, was the mode in which the latter interfered with the revenues of Bengal. Hastings had with great care and skill amended the fiscal system, and reorganized the civil staff of the company. The new council forming a majority of one, undid much of what Hastings had done. They were utterly ignorant of the laws, customs, and views of the people, but with rash hands they pulled down, and with unskilful hands they built up. They put new cloth into old garments, and new wine into old bottles, verifying the aptness of the scripture

illustration. They threw the minor presidencies of Madras and Bombay into confusion by ignorant meddling, for Francis (or "Junius," if he may be so distinguished) considered himself as having a natural title to rule everybody, and a natural gift to govern everything. His imperious commands, endorsed by Clavering and Monson, were let loose as a curse upon India. Lord Macaulay describes the effects of this administration to have been that "all protection to life and property was withdrawn, and that gangs of robbers, slaughtered and plundered with impunity in the very suburbs of Calcutta. Hastings continued to live in the government house, and to draw the salary of governor-general. He continued even to take the lead at the council board in the transaction of ordinary business; for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided both surely and speedily, which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling. But the higher powers of government, and the most valuable patronage had been taken from him." While affairs were growing gradually into confusion, and three members of council, Philip Francis and his two military adherents, were destroying the usefulness and the influence of Hastings, Nundcoomar, so often upon the scene as an evil spirit before, appeared again. He determined to destroy Hastings by charges of corruption sustained by perjury and forgery, and thus be avenged personally for the defeat of previous schemes of villainy discovered and denounced by Hastings. He hoped also to raise himself on the ruins of the great Englishman, and perhaps to enrich himself in any general confusion that might arise out of his schemes. He was destined once more, and for the last time, and fatally, to find that Hastings, with all his mildness of manner, was more than his match in a grand conflict of intellectual acumen; at all events, when there was also scope for resolute and determined action. Four men of master intellect were now about to play a game upon which honour, reputation, and life itself might depend. These men were Warren Hastings, Philip Francis, Sir Elijah Impey the chief-justice, and, scarcely inferior to any of them in astuteness, Nundcoomar, the great Brahmin. Nundcoomar set on foot the mighty tournament of intellectual strength and political chicane, in which all were to suffer, but he most of all.

In the presence of a number of natives of distinction, probably brought together for the purpose, Nundcoomar placed in the hands of Philip Francis, a sealed packet addressed to the council, with the request that it might be opened and read in their presence as it

was for the good of the company and the country, and of vital consequence. Francis introduced it to the council and read it. It was an impeachment of the governor-general, for putting offices for sale, receiving bribes, suffering offenders to escape, and other crimes similar in kind. The morning the paper was read by Francis before the council, Lord Macaulay says "Hastings complained in bitter terms of the way in which he was treated." It is astonishingly strange that his lordship should so characterise the tone or terms of the governor's remarks. He spoke with a calm and lofty dignity free from all bitterness and passion. He did not even betray emotion, but bore himself with a manly self-possession, and expressed himself in words free from contempt of others, except the oft convicted and unprincipled Nundcoomar. The language of Hastings was a noble illustration of the sentiment "*Nec timeo nec sperno.*" Hastings denied the right of the council to sit in judgment upon him; and, recording his protest, retired. At the next assemblage of the council, another packet from Nundcoomar was unsealed by Francis, who admitted that although he had not seen the first packet, he knew substantially what it contained. There was in fact a conspiracy suggested by Nundcoomar, patronised and encouraged by Francis, worked out by the crafty Brahmin, supported by the stupid military adherents of Junius, now finding full scope for his great talents and malignant passions. Nundcoomar petitioned for leave to appear before the council, in order to sustain his charges. Hastings protested against such a course, alleging that the supreme court was the proper place. The three opposing councillors thought otherwise. Nundcoomar was heard, not indeed by the council, for the president dissolved it, but by the three members who were themselves conspirators, and called themselves the council for the occasion.

The events in the council chamber have been described with brevity by Lord Macaulay, thus:—"Nundcoomar not only adhered to the original charges, but, after the fashion of the East, produced a large supplement. He stated that Hastings had received a large sum for appointing Rajah Goordas, treasurer of the nabob's household, and for committing the care of his highness's person to the Munny Begum. He put in a letter purporting to bear the seal of the Munny Begum, for the purpose of establishing the truth of his story. The seal, whether forged, as Hastings affirmed, or genuine, as we are inclined to believe, proved nothing. Nundcoomar, as everybody knows who knows India, had only to tell the Munny Begum, that such a letter



would give pleasure to the majority of the council, in order to procure her attestation. The majority, however, voted that the charge was made out; that Hastings had corruptly received between thirty and forty thousand pounds; and that he ought to be compelled to refund."

There were important points brought out in the investigation of these accusations which proved that Nundcoomar had either committed, or suborned some one to commit, a forgery for the purpose of ruining Hastings. The letter alleged to be written by the hand of the Munny Begum, which Nundcoomar delivered in, was compared with one received from her by Sir John D'Oyley, from the Persian department. The seal was pronounced to be the same on both letters, the handwriting to be different. M. Auber, noticing what followed, says:—"The majority observed that the letter to Nundcoomar had been written a year and a half before, and the letter produced by Sir John D'Oyley within a few days. In either case there was sufficient proof of the delinquency of Nundcoomar. If its authenticity be admitted, its contents established the fact of a conspiracy on the part of the Begum and Nundcoomar. If its authenticity be denied, the guilt of forgery against Nundcoomar is placed beyond doubt."

On the 11th of April, Nundcoomar was accused before the judges of the supreme court, of being party to a conspiracy against the governor-general and others, by compelling a man to write a petition injurious to their characters, and sign a statement of bribes, alleged to have been received by his excellency and his servants. Next day an examination was instituted before the judges. A charge on oath was exhibited against Nundcoomar, one Radaehum, and an Englishman named Fowke. The accused were bound over to take their trial at the following assizes.

General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, accompanied by Fowke, one of the accused, went the next day to Nundcoomar's house, to pay him a formal visit. They also, both in Calcutta and in London, took means to influence public opinion by publishing the alleged vices of the governor. In Calcutta, where circumstances and men were known and understood, these efforts utterly failed, and a strong tide of indignation set in against the three members of council. In England their efforts were more fortunate, and prejudice was circulated in the court of directors and in parliament, as well as in the country, against Hastings. Hastings, aware of their exertions, also struggled to maintain the justice of his

own cause. In a letter written to the directors at this juncture, the following passage occurs, in which, in respectful, dignified, and feeling terms, he appeals to the public opinion of his countrymen in India, as to the rectitude of his conduct and the malevolence of his persecutors:—"There are many men in England of unquestioned knowledge and integrity, who have been eye-witness of all the transactions of this government in the short interval in which I had the chief direction of it. There are many hundreds in England who have correspondents in Bengal, from whom they have received successive advices of those transactions, and opinions of the authors of them. I solemnly make my appeal to these concurring testimonies, and if, in justice to your honourable court, by whom I was chosen for the high station which I lately filled, by whom my conduct has been applauded, and through whom I have obtained the distinguished honour assigned me by the legislature itself, in my nomination to fill the first place in the new administration of India, I may be allowed the liberty of making so uncommon a request, I do most earnestly entreat that you will be pleased to call upon those who, from their own knowledge or the communications of others, can contribute such information, to declare severally the opinions which they have entertained of the measures of my administration, the tenour of my conduct in every department of this government, and the effects which it has produced, both in conciliating the minds of the natives to the British government, in confirming your authority over the country, and in advancing your interest in it. From these, and from the testimonies of your own records, let me be judged, not from the malevolent declamations of those who, having no services of their own to plead, can only found their reputation on the destruction of mine."

Meanwhile Nundcoomar and the majority of the council were shamelessly and openly identified in their efforts to annihilate the reputation and the power of Hastings. On the 6th of May, however, the Brahmin was arrested upon a charge of forgery, by a merchant of Calcutta. That this imputation was a *bond fide* one no one doubted, for all knew that there was no villainy which the dishonest and perjurious Brahmin would not perpetrate. On the 9th of May, the majority of the council displaced Munny Begum, the guardian of the infant nabob, on the ground of peculation of the revenues. This was the person on the accusation of whose letter the majority of the council had accused Hastings! Either they never believed her, or discovered, after the accusation was made that her testimony was

worthless, or they knew, from the first, that the letter, alleged to be in her handwriting, had not been written by her. The conduct of the council in deposing her, after having a short time before paraded her as a witness against Hastings, scandalized all Calcutta; but the scandal was far greater when, immediately after, a son of Nundcoomar, a person of notorious incapacity, was placed virtually in her stead. Thus the repeatedly convicted perjurer, forger, and treason-monger was publicly honoured, while yet under the impeachment of another added to his many well-known crimes. It is not credible that Francis and his two military coadjutors would have dared to proceed to such lengths if not encouraged by private correspondence with the ministerial party in parliament anxious to wrest the government of India from the company, for sake of the patronage, their eagerness to seize which was too great for them to disguise. While Nundcoomar was in prison, he petitioned the council that he could not perform the ablutions necessary for him as a Brahmin while in a state of such confinement. The council addressed the judges on the subject, thinking to make the circumstance a ground for Nundcoomar's release. The judges replied that they had taken thought of the matter, and appointed certain learned pundits to report upon the case, whose report was to the effect that the accommodation was sufficient; that caste would not be lost by the prisoner. The judges, however, in spirited and indignant terms, insisted that the council should not again presume to interfere with the course of British justice; that if the prisoner was aggrieved, the judges, not the council, were the persons to whom to appeal; that they understood their duty without any monitions from a portion of the council; and that as the natives sought everything from power and nothing from justice, the judgment-seat must be preserved from even the appearance of government interference. Nundcoomar remained in prison until the assizes, and his trial came on in the routine of its business. He was arraigned before an English jury, and his trial was conducted with the strictest impartiality and fairness; a verdict was returned in the usual manner, after the deliberation customary with British juries, and that verdict was *Guilty*. Never was a verdict more in accordance with truth and justice. Sir Elijah Impey, the chief-justice, sentenced the guilty man to death. Great was the consternation of the council; they protested, but no notice was taken of their protest. Public opinion sustained that of the jury: Englishmen and natives believed that he was guilty. Colonel Clavering

vowed that Nundcoomar must be saved, even from the foot of the gallows; but he knew well that Hastings was determined that justice should have its course, and that Sir Elijah Impey, the chief-justice, was also determined to vindicate the law, and the independence of the judges, at all costs. The natives would not believe that any judge would dare to sentence a Brahmin, or that judges or governor would permit one so sacred to be executed for any crime. They knew he was as bad a man as ever fell by the executioner; but he was a Brahmin, and the priestly caste was sacred. On the day of his execution, vast multitudes crowded to Calcutta, still unbelieving as to the fate of the chief Brahmin of Bengal. Whether from the impression that, at the last moment, he would be forcibly rescued by the council, or respite by the administrative authorities, or from the strange indifference to death which characterises his caste, he approached his fate without any sign of fear or reluctance. He ascended the scaffold calmly, and, to all appearance, fearlessly, and was hanged. The lamentations of the people were such as not merely to astonish, but to awe the British. They detested and yet revered Nundcoomar; they lamented because their religion was outraged by the ignominious execution of a Brahmin, a caste which sinned with impunity so far as Hindoo law and custom were concerned. Neither Nundcoomar nor the natives had any idea that there was among the English a power greater than that of a governor-general, or a council, or a general of an army,—the power of law as seen and administered in the courts and from the tribunals of law. This was to them a new idea, and struck universal terror into their hearts. The effect, as it regarded Hastings, was immediate. There were no more forgeries and perjuries manufactured to please the more powerful council: the dread of the mysterious tribunal appalled a whole nation of liars and perjurers. Nothing could prove more fully the turpitude and cowardice of the native character than these disgraceful transactions had done. When to accuse the governor-general pleased those more powerful than he, numbers were ready to meet their wishes by accusations; but when it was seen that there was an authority higher than governor-general and council combined—that of English law—their hearts were stricken with fear, and none dared to resort to the arts of knavery and treachery, so much their practice and delight.

Much blame has been thrown upon the judges, especially Chief-justice Impey. Lord Macaulay doubts the legality of the proceeding, and describes Sir Elijah Impey as the

tool of Hastings. There was nothing in the conduct of Sir Elijah in trying Nundcoomar, or in accepting the verdict of the jury, to justify this language. Whether Sir Elijah had authority to pronounce the sentence which he did pronounce, was open to discussion, was discussed, and many men fit to determine such a question have decided in his favour. The whole case has received a clear and impartial statement from the pen of Professor Wilson. He thus puts it:—"It is true, that no circumstance in the administration of Hastings, has been so injurious to his reputation as the execution of Nundcoomar—whether rightfully so is a different question. From the moment that Nundcoomar became the object of judicial investigation, it would have ill become the governor to have interfered—it was not for him to interpose his personal or official influence to arrest the course of the law, nor would it have availed. The supreme court was new to its position, strongly impressed with a notion of its dignity, and sensitively jealous of its power. The judges would have at once indignantly resisted any attempt to bias their decision. For the fate of Nundcoomar, they are alone responsible. It is presently admitted that they decided according to law, and the attempt to impeach the chief-justice, Sir Elijah Impey on this ground, subsequently failed. It is therefore to be concluded, that the sentence was strictly according to law, and there can be no doubt that the crime was proved. The infliction of the sentence, however, upon a native of India, for an offence of which his countrymen knew not the penalty, and which had been committed before the full introduction of those laws which made it a capital crime, was the assertion of law at the expense of reason and humanity: with this Hastings has nothing to do—the fault, and a grievous one it was, rests with the judges. The question, as it concerns the governor, regards only the share he had in the prosecution. Did he in any way instigate or encourage it? The prosecutor was a party concerned, a native, unconnected with the governor. He may have thought he was doing a not unacceptable act in prosecuting a personal antagonist of Hastings, but that was his feeling. There is no necessity to suppose that he was urged on by Hastings: he had wrongs of his own to avenge, and needed no other instigation. There is no positive proof that he acted in concert with Hastings; we are therefore left to circumstantial proof, and the only circumstance upon which the participation of Hastings in the persecution of Nundcoomar, is, its following hard upon the latter's charges against him. These were preferred on the 11th of March, 1775. On the 6th of May following,

Nundcoomar was arrested under a warrant of the court at the suit of Mohun Persaud. Here is certainly a suspicious coincidence—but is there no other way of accounting for it than by imputations fatal to the character of W. Hastings? In truth, it seems capable of such explanation as acquits Hastings of having exercised any influence over it. Proceedings in the same cause did not then commence. They had been instituted before in the Dewanny Adaulat, and Nundcoomar had been confined by the judge, but released by order of Hastings. The suit had therefore been suspended, but it had not been discontinued. The supreme court sat for the first time at the end of October, 1774. The forged instrument had been deposited in the mayor's court, and could not be recovered until all the papers had been transferred to the supreme court, and without it no suit could be proceeded with. At the very first opportunity afterwards, or in the commencement of 1775, at the first effective court of Oyer and Terminer and gaol delivery, held by the supreme court, the indictment was preferred and tried. It is not necessary to suspect Hastings of having from vindictive motives suggested or accelerated the prosecution. It had previously been brought into another court, where it was asserted the influence of the governor-general had screened the criminal, and it was again brought into an independent court at the first possible moment when it could be instituted. The coincidence was unfortunate, but it seems to have been unavoidable; and in the absence of all possible proof, the conjectural evidence is not unexceptionable enough to justify the imputation so recklessly advanced by Burke, and seemingly implied in the observations of the text, that Hastings had murdered Nundcoomar by the hands of Sir E. Impey.\*

Upon the effect of this event on the fortunes of Hastings, and upon the government of Bengal, Lord Macaulay remarks as follows: "The head of the combination which had been formed against him, the richest, the most powerful, the most artful of the Hindoos, distinguished by the favour of those who then

\* The learned doctor deduced his opinion from the following sources of information:—"For the preceding charges against Mr. Hastings, and the proceedings of the council, see the Eleventh Report of the Select Committee, in 1781, with its Appendix; Burke's Charges against Hastings, No. 8, and Hastings' Answer to the Eighth Charge, with the Minutes of Evidence on the Trial, pp. 953—1001; and the Charges against Sir Elijah Impey, exhibited to the House of Commons by Sir Gilbert Elliot, in 1787, with the Speech of Impey in reply to the first charge, printed, with an Appendix, by Stockdale, in 1788. For the execution and behaviour of Nundcoomar, see a very interesting account, written by the sheriff who superintended, and printed in Dodsley's *Annual Register* for 1788, Historical part, p. 157."

held the government, fenced round by the superstitious reverence of millions, was hanged in broad day before many thousands of people. Everything that could make the warning impressive,—dignity in the sufferer, solemnity in the proceeding,—was found in this case. The helpless rage and vain struggles of the council made the triumph more signal. From that moment the conviction of every native was, that it was safer to take the part of Hastings in a minority, than of Francis in a majority, and that he who was so venturesome to join in running down the governor-general might chance, in the phrase of the Eastern poet, to find a tiger while beating the jungle for a deer. The voices of a thousand informers were silent in an instant. From that time, whatever difficulties Hastings might have to encounter, he was never molested by accusations from natives of India."

The calm resolution of Hastings, under the most trying circumstances, was proved by his conduct throughout these trying and harassing affairs, especially in the episode of the execution of Nundcoomar. Miss Martineau draws from the calm resolve of the governor of Bengal proof of his want of feeling, and of an indurated heart. This opinion is undoubtedly severe, and probably unjust. The discussion, however, of such questions belongs rather to the task of the biographer than the historian. Lord Macaulay was struck with the coolness of the English governor on this occasion, and truly observes:—"It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the letters of Hastings to Dr. Johnson bears date a very few hours after the death of Nundcoomar. While the whole settlement was in commotion, while a mighty and ancient priesthood were weeping over the remains of their chief, the conqueror in that deadly grapple sat down, with characteristic self-possession, to write about the *Tour to the Hebrides*, Jones' *Persian Grammar*, and the history, tradition, arts, and natural productions of India."

When tidings of all these events reached England, there was commotion in the cabinet and the court of directors. The majority in the council of Bengal had powerful interest at home. Lord North was adverse to Hastings, and endeavoured to procure for the company an address, upon which, by virtue of "the regulation act," under which Hastings was appointed, the minister would be empowered to remove him. Lord North was anxious to put Clavering in the place of Hastings, as the general was the minister's nominee, and the confederate of the other two members of council constituting the factious majority, for a majority may be factious as well as a minority. This is not the appropriate place in which to

depict the peculiar features of the contest among the directors, the court of proprietary, and the cabinet ministers; suffice it to say that Lord North was defeated, and never did a minister show less dignity under a political defeat than did his lordship on that occasion. Hastings, having foreseen this contest, had provided against it. He had placed in the hands of his agent, Colonel Maclean, his resignation, with directions to present it to the court only when a moment of such emergency should arise as imperatively to demand such a course. Menaced on all hands as Hastings was, notwithstanding his recent victory over Lord North, and the ministry, Maclean felt that there was no means of saving his friend from expulsion and degradation but by an opportune use of the power entrusted to him, and he accordingly presented the resignation. The directors eagerly accepted it, and nominated one of their own body, a Mr. Wheeler, to the vacated post, at the same time writing to General Clavering to assume the government of Bengal *pro tempore*.

While these things were proceeding in London, events were passing in rapid succession in Bengal, which had an equal, or even greater influence upon the fortunes of Hastings, and enabled the intrepid and self-collected man to overbear all obstacles and all hostilities. Monson died, and left Hastings only two opponents in the council—Clavering and Francis. His casting vote enabled him to determine all matters in favour of his own policy. Thus after two years of persecution, and while bearing the insignia of office, holding only the semblance of power, he became absolute, for Barwell, although a clever man, and far better acquainted with the administration of Indian business than Clavering or Francis, was yet completely under the influence of Hastings. The governor now seized upon the patronage of the province, displacing the officials who were appointed by the late majority, and reversing all their partizan decrees. In order to mark more signally that a new era had commenced, Hastings ordered, in the name of the council (by power of his casting vote), a valuation of the lands of Bengal, in order to form a basis for a new plan of revenue. All correspondence was ordered to be under his sole control, and the whole inquiry to be directed by him. He next laid down vast schemes for the aggrandizement of the company's interests, for which, and not for any venal purposes, he thought and toiled. The plans he projected were realized, and within his own lifetime, although it was not reserved for his own administration to carry them out. While he was thus engaged the intelligence arrived

in England of the proceedings in the cabinet, the court of directors, and the court of proprietary, in which he was so deeply interested.

Hastings had in the meantime, by the sheer force of his genius, industry, and intelligence, as well as by the concurrence of events, gained such a personal ascendancy in India, that he was unwilling to surrender his high functions, especially, even for a season, to his rival—Clavering. He refused to surrender the presidential chair. Clavering essayed to occupy it by force, and a fierce struggle ensued. Clavering, with much show of reason, appealed to the orders of the directors. Hastings replied that the orders were based upon a mistake, which, when the directors discovered, they would themselves of necessity abrogate. He declared that he had not resigned his office. His own account long afterwards of the transaction was, that Maclean had exceeded and misapprehended his powers; but that nevertheless he would have resigned the government of Bengal had not Clavering made offensive haste and insulting demonstrations, in his eagerness to grasp the office.

Clavering, immediately on the arrival of intelligence, seized the keys of the fort, important papers, books, and documents, and formed Francis and himself into a council. Hastings sat in another apartment of the fort with Barwell, and continued to issue the orders of government, which none dared to disobey, so completely had the master mind of Hastings asserted itself. The English in Bengal unanimously, or all but unanimously, supported him; and the Bengalees had trembled at his name ever since the rope had put an end to the intrigues of Nund-comar. Either Hastings felt that his cause was just, or that he had the formalities of law on his side, for he offered to abide by the decision of the supreme court of Calcutta. This met the approbation of the English in Bengal, who saw no other way of averting a

civil struggle, which might be attended with bloodshed, and ruinous to English interests. Clavering was compelled to succumb to public opinion, although he and Francis were averse to any arbitration of matters, legal or otherwise.

The decision of the court was that the resignation presented by Colonel Maclean was invalid, and that Hastings, according to the letter of the "Regulation Act," was still governor-general. After this, Clavering and Francis lost all hope of offering an effectual resistance.

Immediately upon these transactions Hastings married a foreign lady, the divorced wife of a foreigner, with whom he had lived on terms of illicit intimacy for years, and under circumstances the most singular, romantic, and reprehensible, furnishing to his biographers ample material for exciting narrative, and ingenious speculations as to his character. It does not speak well for the morality of English society at Calcutta at the time, that the wedding was celebrated with great splendour by the whole community. Hastings, elated with the success of all his schemes, in love and politics, invited General Clavering to the wedding. The general was at the time broken in spirit and in health; he was in fact dying. Making the state of his health his only excuse for not affording his presence to the festivities, Hastings went personally to him, and insisted upon the oblivion of past differences being thus publicly proved. Clavering was brought captive, as it were, to the brilliant festivities; but he drooped there, and retired to die. In a few days he expired. Francis now alone remained to oppose Hastings. His proud and arrogant spirit could not be quelled. He struggled for a time with dogged and spiteful pertinacity, and then went home, where he lived long enough to be a thorn in the side of Hastings, when, at the greatest crisis of his history, he stood impeached before the senate of England.

## CHAPTER LXXXIV.

GOVERNMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL (*Continued*)—ARRIVAL OF MR. WHELER TO ASSUME THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL—REFUSAL OF HASTINGS TO SURRENDER IT—OPPRESSIVENESS OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATION IN BENGAL—DUEL BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND PHILIP FRANCIS—FRANCIS LEAVES INDIA—ANARCHY IN OUDE—WAR WITH THE MAHRATTAS.

WHEN Mr. Wheeler arrived at Calcutta, he found Hastings in the full possession of authority, and likely to retain it. The disappointed governor was, however, a member of council, and united with Francis in opposition to the governor *de facto*. Their opposition was of little avail. Hastings continued to rule, and with such personal tact, administrative capacity, and comprehensive genius, that the directors at home veered round in his favour, and Lord North dared not to displace him. Events in Europe favoured the uninterrupted possession by Hastings of the presidency of Bengal. England had to maintain a fearful struggle with foreign enemies, and her own colonial fellow-citizens in America became disaffected. Wars abroad, and bad government at home, placed England in imminent danger. The cabinet, instead of assailing Hastings, were glad to have a governor who knew so well how to govern. The English ministry had no leisure to attend to India.

Although Hastings had undisputed authority, his difficulties were great, and scarcely was one danger encountered, and conquered by his genius, than another sprung up. War in regions beyond the province of Bengal, blunders by his own officers, civil and military, and the harassing opposition of Francis and Wheeler, occupied his industry and vigilance incessantly. Before noticing the warlike events of his government, not already related, it is desirable to glance at the civil impediments to his sway with which he had to contend. Sir Eyre Coote, who had distinguished himself so much in Indian warfare, from the battle of Plassey, to that of Wandiwash and the capture of Pondicherry, and after the warfare of the Carnatic, elsewhere, was appointed commander-in-chief of the company's armies. This appointment gave him a seat at the council board, and being naturally obstinate, haughty, and self-willed, he frequently disputed the authority of Hastings, and sided with Francis and Wheeler. When this was the case, Hastings was in a minority, and his views were overruled. The vigilance of Francis never slept. His bitterness was as lasting as his vigilance was wakeful. There were, therefore, many occasions on which he succeeded, with due management of Coote, in

putting Hastings into a minority. Hastings, however, practised the arts of management better than Francis, and by gratifying Coote's love of "allowances," in a majority of instances secured his vote. Besides, Coote more generally agreed with Hastings than with Francis. The latter was ignorant of India, but the commander-in-chief, like the governor-general, knew it well. Moreover, the soldier was often in the field, and then the governor had his own way without any chance of being disturbed. These contingencies in the constitution of the council, gave uncertainty to their decisions, and frustrated some of the best administrative measures of the president.

A singular state of things arose under the pretensions of the judges. English law was hated by all classes of the natives, and it was administered proudly and oppressively. Its slowness and expensiveness were ruinous to the natives, who groaned under its oppressions. Sir Elijah Impey, as chief of the supreme court, had the highest possible notions of his own official authority, and the respect due to all the forms of law. He was supported by the other judges in a system of legal administration which evoked the curses of the whole community, English and natives. No man felt safe from the tyranny of the courts. The civil servants were constantly unable to carry out the orders of the government from their interference; and Hastings, who had himself done so much to recognise the power of the courts, was almost driven to despair by the way in which that power was wielded. Words could not describe the misery, conflict, and disaffection which ensued, as far as the supreme court extended its authority, and probably no problem in the government of Hastings presented itself as so hard of solution, as that of the true province of the English courts. Lord Macaulay ascribes the evil in this case to the indifference of the legislature in forming "the regulation act:"—"The authors of the regulating act of 1773, had established two independent powers, the one judicial, and the other political; and, with a carelessness scandalously common in English legislation, had omitted to define the limits of the other." The same author depicts the

results of the consequent efforts of the judges to define the limits of their own authority in the most extensive manner, and amongst others gives the following descriptions:—"Many natives highly considered among their countrymen, were seized, hurried up to Calcutta, flung into the common gaol, not for any crime imputed, not for any debt that had been proved, but merely as a precaution till their cause should come for trial." "There were instances in which men of the most venerable dignity, persecuted without a cause by extortioners, died of rage and shame in the gripe of the vile alquazils of Impey." "No Mahratta invasion had ever spread through the province such dismay as this inroad of English lawyers. All the injustice of former oppressors, Asiatic and European, appeared as a blessing when compared with the justice of the supreme court."

It is not to be supposed that Sir Elijah Impey acted illegally. Many of the acts of the courts which spread terror and despair through Bengal, were tamely submitted to in England, and supposed to be a becoming "part and parcel" of a most just code, the pride of England and the envy of surrounding nations. The laws and the courts were terrible oppressions in England, to all but the rich and powerful; but they were oppressions to all alike in India, and probably rich natives more than any other felt them. Some of the most inequitable charges and decisions, delivered with party or personal feeling, and in terms illogical as well as offensive, have been delivered in England by English judges, without exciting much indignation, so strong has been the prejudice and pride of the English people in behalf of their laws, and those who administer them; but in India no such feelings were entertained, and the whole system of English jurisprudence, and its mode of administration, was regarded as barbarous and atrocious.

It was probably the intent of Hastings to keep Sir Elijah Impey in his interest, but he resolutely resolved to oppose the system of legal administration adopted by the learned judge. The governor stood firmly on the side of the people, and for once he received the unanimous support of his council. The judges served the council with writs to answer in court for their acts! Hastings ridiculed the summons, forcibly dismissed various persons wrongfully accused, and opposed the sword to the writs of the sheriff's officers.\* Hastings, however, contrived to avert a conflict between the crown and the company. Impey had £8000 a year as chief of the supreme court, Hastings offered him another £8000\* a

\* Lord Macaulay names this sum, Auber £6000.

year as a judge in the service of the company, dismissible at the governor's pleasure; but the office was conferred on the condition, privately stipulated, that he would cease to assert the disputed powers of the supreme court. He accepted the bribe. Bengal was freed from the turmoil which had been created, and Hastings from the difficulty which it presented to his government.

For a short time a sort of truce had been formed between Hastings and Francis. Barwell promoted a peace between the two great opponents, because he wanted to leave India, and had pledged himself that he would not do so, if the result would place the governor in a minority. The truce did not last long; Francis was opposed to Impey, and was exasperated that his old enemy should have a new honour and splendid emolument conferred upon him, simply to prevent his doing mischief. Lord Macaulay justifies Hastings in buying off Impey's adverse power, seeing that it inflicted so much evil upon the inhabitants of Bengal, on the principle that justifies a man in paying a ransom to a pirate to obtain a release of captives. His lordship's reasoning and illustration are alike unhappy in this case. The conduct of Hastings was censurable. Where he believed punishment was deserved, he conferred honour. He bribed the judge either to forego what was due to law and justice, or to give up an abuse of power. To induce a judge by any means to forego what law and justice required would be clearly wrong; to induce him by a bribe to forego the improper use of his authority could hardly be less wrong. An appeal to the crown and the company was the obvious duty of Hastings, and if they refused to redress the evil, he should have resigned his government, on the ground that he could not as an honourable man administer it under the circumstances. Unhappily, it is too probable that Hastings, having little confidence in the wisdom of either crown or company, and no confidence at all in the integrity of the English cabinet, chose the way by which he might best serve himself, and serve Impey also, while he stopped the mischief. Francis found a good opportunity for damaging Hastings in this transaction, and it is difficult not to prefer the logic of the malignant accuser of the governor in this case, than that of his eloquent defender. It is probable that Francis merely accepted the compromise effected by Barwell, to induce the latter to leave India. Such was the opinion of Hastings afterwards, and he indignantly charged Francis with the imputation of faithlessness and dishonour in this respect.

After various stormy meetings of council,

Hastings inflicted an insult on Francis which was provoked, and probably deserved, but which Francis was unable to endure. The governor in a minute recorded on the consultations of the government, inserted the following expressions: "I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour." When the council rose, Francis placed a challenge in the hands of the governor, who accepted it. A duel took place, in which Francis was severely wounded. Hastings was kind, inquired daily for him, and desired permission to call and see him. Francis refused, acknowledging the politeness of the offer, but declining to meet Hastings any where except in council. When he did return to council, his implacable hatred still raged. Lord Macaulay gives Francis credit for patriotism; to whatever degree he cultivated that virtue, his conduct in India did not display it. His patriotism was never seen to less advantage than after his recovery from the wound inflicted by Hastings. At that juncture Hyder Ali, to whom reference has been repeatedly made on former pages, swept all before him, penetrating to Madras. The governor of that presidency proved himself incapable, and Hastings afforded many and fresh proofs of his genius by the way in which he encountered this vast peril. During all those efforts, so worthy of his great reputation, he was impeded by Francis, whose sulky and malevolent opposition never ceased, until at last, finding all his animosity powerless, and recoiling upon himself, he left India. Wheler, his coadjutor in opposition, tamed down into a quiet and acquiescent follower of Hastings, who was thus left as a sovereign whose sway was undisputed, to govern Bengal, and direct the affairs of India generally.

While such were the distractions and vicissitudes in the council, events were taking place in every direction requiring unanimity and energy. No doubt the governor-general, if not obstructed by either a majority in the council or by an obstinate minority, who consumed time uselessly, and impeded public business, would have exercised an efficient control everywhere. As it was, he proved equal to every emergency.

During 1775, Oude was in a state of perpetual turmoil; the nabob squandered the resources of the state in folly and debauchery, and left public affairs to his chief minister—an enemy of the English, without whose support the nabob could not stand. The king of Delhi constituted the nabob his vizier, as his predecessor had been—this was supposed to have

been a spontaneous act of the Mogul. After his appointment to the dignity of vizier, the nabob became worse than before, both in his personal conduct and his government. Assassinations of some of the most distinguished persons in his dominions were laid to his account; murders were committed in his presence by courtiers, men of equal rank being the victims. Nearly all the talented persons at the head of the civil and military services were treacherously slain or obliged to fly beyond the territory of Oude. Revolts of the troops and massacres repeatedly occurred. British officers were appointed to discipline the nabob's soldiers, which led to a conspiracy and wide-spread mutiny: some of the officers were slain by the mutineers, others escaped, many with wounds, while a portion of the officers succeeded in subduing their soldiers and restoring order.

Apprehensions of the projects of the French were very generally received at this period among the English in India. French officers were observed in various parts of the country as if suspiciously engaged. A report of this was made to the government. It was also stated that the force at Pondicherry was considerable, amounting to one thousand Europeans, and a nearly equal number of black soldiers.

The connection of the three presidencies under a governor-general worked well, and gave scope for the business talents and comprehensive plans of Hastings.

Ragoba and the Bombay government entered into negotiations under the advice of Hastings, which issued in his cession to the company of Bassein, Salsette, Jambooseer, and Orphad, with the Islands of Caranga, Canary, Elephanta, and Hog Island; thus affording to Bombay Island a security never before possessed. The Bombay government, in virtue of the treaty with Ragoba, received him when a fugitive in their territory, and assisted him with arms and men to regain his ascendancy as chief of the Mahratta nation. While embarked in this undertaking, orders arrived from the supreme council at Calcutta revoking everything done at Bombay, and in terms haughty and arrogant. This was the work of the majority of the council opposed to Hastings. The Calcutta council even sent an officer to Poonah to treat with the enemies of Ragoba, thus humiliating utterly the council of Bombay. Madras was ordered not to assist the policy initiated at Bombay. The measures of the Bengal council failed, and, after all, that factious body were compelled to commit the transaction of a treaty to the council of Bombay, which acted in conformity with the opinion of Hast-



ings. Still, so unsteady and inconsistent were the directions of the supreme council, that confusion and dishonour ensued; and much injury to the company's interests would certainly have happened had not the directors at home revoked the orders of the supreme council, and censured the whole of its conduct to that of Bombay.

In 1777 the French gained some ascendancy over the government of Poonah, in consequence of the continued feuds of the Bombay and Bengal councils. The arrogant spirits of Clavering and Francis wrought mischief everywhere. The conclusion of these diplomatic squabbles, and of the conflicts at the Mahratta capital, is thus briefly recorded by Auber:—"In March, 1778, a revolution broke out at Poonah in favour of Ragoba, in whose name a proclamation was issued for restoring peace and order. In July, the Bombay council declared that the treaty concluded by Colonel Upton had been violated by the Durbar proceedings; and that they were consequently freed from its obligations. They also declared that measures had become imperatively necessary to defeat the intrigues of the French, who had been long exerting themselves in schemes hostile to the English.\* They proposed to place Ragoba in the regency at Poonah, and that he should conduct the government in the name of the Peishwa. This latter arrangement appeared to be in consonance with the views of the court of directors.† The necessary operations consequent upon this determination could not be commenced until the month of September. In October a treaty was concluded with Ragoba, by which the company were to assist him with four thousand troops to conduct him to Poonah."‡

The affairs of the Nabob of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore still continued to give uneasiness to the company. Lord Pigot having assumed the government of Madras at the close of 1775, set about adjusting the relations between the nabob, the rajah, and the company; but jealousies between the civil and military officers as to their respective dignities, embroiled the presidency in disputes, and delayed the execution of Lord Pigot's plans. His lordship's temper, however, was the greatest of all impediments to his projects. To such a length did he carry his idea of his own authority, and so arbitrary was he in his government, that at last the majority of the council arrested him. The admiral on the station demanded his release, in the king's name; the council refused with-

out the king's order. The supreme government at Calcutta supported the council of Madras. The death of Lord Pigot terminated the dispute. The English were unable to undertake almost anything at that time without violent discussions among themselves.

The conflicts between Hyder Ali and the Mahrattas, and the feuds among the Mahratta chiefs, in which the Bombay government was to some extent involved, led the council of Bengal to send troops overland to Bombay in 1778. Colonel Leslie, and this force, began their march on May 4th, but it proceeded so slowly, and with such little military judgment, that it was necessary to supersede the commander.

In November, Captain Stuart seized the pass of Boru Ghaut, which opened the way to Poonah; it was held and fortified. He was followed from Bombay by a considerable force in November, consisting of about four thousand men, of whom six hundred and thirty-nine were Europeans. On the 1st of January this army, under Colonel Egerton, began its march upon Poonah, but had to retreat fighting before a superior force. Fearful of a fresh attack, the English opened negotiations, but the Mahrattas refused unless Ragoba were surrendered. A disastrous treaty, consenting to everything the Mahrattas demanded, was the result of the expedition. This treaty the council of Bombay refused to ratify, and that of Calcutta approved of their policy. Brigadier Goddard, with a force from Bengal, reached Surat, and, being joined by Ragoba after the latter had made gallant and desperate efforts to effect the junction, the combined forces attacked the confederated Mahratta chiefs, and gained various decisive victories, until the close of the year 1780, when they went into quarters. So well did Hastings provide the sinews of war, that he remitted a crore of rupees to the governments of Madras and Bombay.

Many transactions took place in the interests of the company during the government of Hastings, of which little notice has been taken in history, but which had influence upon the general condition of the English territory. The treaty of the 2nd December, 1779, with the Rana of Gohud, is an instance. The Rana of Gohud, then described as "a chief south of Agra," made overtures for effecting a treaty with the company, to secure himself against the Mahrattas. The terms were agreed to and signed on the 2nd of December. The company were to furnish a force for the defence of his country on paying 20,000 Muchildar rupees for each battalion of sepoys; nine-sixteenths of any acquisitions were to go to the company. The rana

\* Secret Letter from Bengal, April, 1778.

† Letter to Bombay, July, 1777.

‡ Vide *Printed Treaties*.

was to furnish ten thousand horse, whose combined operations might be determined on against the Mahrattas. Whenever peace took place between the company and the Mahrattas, the rana was to be included, and his present possessions, with the fort of Gwalior, were to be guaranteed to him.

As war was apprehended with France in 1778, Hastings made vast and skilful efforts to prepare the territories he governed against all contingencies, as he concluded that some alliances with native powers would be effected by the French. The declaration of war in London was sent by the secret committee of the court of directors, overland *via* Cairo, and orders were issued to the supreme council to reduce Pondicherry.

Mohammed Reza Cawn now ceased to act as regent in Bengal, and the young nabob took upon himself the full responsibilities of his government.

Mr. Auber bears the following testimony to the labours of Hastings at this time:—"Mr. Hastings, in the midst of his other varied and important avocations, did not lose sight of the interests of science and literature. A copy of the Mohammedan laws had been translated by Mr. Anderson, under the sanction and patronage of the government, and sent home to the court, together with the Bengal grammar prepared by Messrs. Halhed and Wilkins, five hundred copies being taken by the government at thirty rupees a copy, as an encouragement to their labours. Mr. Wilkins\* was also supported in erecting and working a press for the purpose of printing official papers, &c. The Madrisa, or Mohammedan college, for the education of the natives, was established by the government. In order to open a communication by the Red Sea with Europe, the government built a vessel at Mocha, having been assured that every endeavour would be made to secure the privilege of despatches, with the company's seal, being forwarded with facility; the trade with Suez having been prohibited to all British subjects, on a complaint to the king's ministers by the Ottoman Porte."

During the close of the year 1779, the Carnatic was seriously disturbed, and the cares of that province now fell upon the supreme council, although its immediate superintendence belonged to the Madras presidency. In 1780 struggles took place in which the existence of the company, in the Madras presidency, was seriously menaced. The great war with Hyder must form the subject of a separate chapter. It is here desirable to follow the general events of the government

of Mr. Hastings. The conflict with the Mysorean chief was too extensive and important to be brought within the records of a chapter so general in its subjects as the present. It may here, however, be observed that almost every occurrence connected with the management of affairs in Madras itself at this period, complicated the relations of that presidency to the Carnatic, and those of the supreme government to Hyder Ali and the Mahrattas. Indeed, the government of Madras seemed alike to set at defiance the directions of the supreme council of Calcutta, and of the court of directors in London. Sir Thomas Rumbold, Mr. Whitehill, and Mr. Perring, the three principal members of the Madras council, set an example of insubordination. The first-named was governor, but, finding that his proceedings excited so much displeasure in Calcutta, and in London, he resigned the government in January, 1780, and was succeeded in the presidential chair by Mr. Whitehill, the senior councillor. The party in the council to which these gentlemen belonged had, with other eccentric proceedings, abolished "the commission of circuit," which had been established by the express orders of the directors, to prevent the hardship incurred by the rajahs and zemindars, in being obliged to have all their disputes adjudicated in the chief city of the presidency, however great the distance at which they resided.

M. Auber describes other freaks and absurdities of this party in the following terms:—"They had also entered into an agreement with Sitteram Rauze, for renting the havilly lands for a term of ten years, and had appointed him dewan of the Vizianagram district, a measure which the directors considered to inflict a cruel and unnecessary degradation on his brother. They had likewise disposed of the Guntoor circar to the nabob for a term of ten years. This circar had, by treaty, been delivered to the company by Bazalet Jung, in 1779, he receiving from them a permanent rent, equal to what his aumils had paid to him." As to the effect of such conduct at home and at Calcutta, M. Auber adds:—"These proceedings were diametrically opposed to the orders of the directors. The motives and principles by which the parties had been governed in their adoption appeared so very questionable, that Sir Thomas Rumbold, Mr. Whitehill, and Mr. Perring were dismissed the company's service;\* and on the 17th of January, 1781, Lord Macartney was appointed governor of Madras. His lordship, as was then customary, expressed his acknowledgment to the court of directors, and to the company, in a general court of pro-

\* Afterwards Sir Charles Wilkins, librarian to the court of directors.

\* Letter to Madras, 10th of January, 1781.

prietors. On the 18th of January, the proprietors being met to consider the conduct of Mr. Paul Benfield, Mr. Burke, as proprietor, delivered in a paper, entitled heads of objections to be inquired into before Mr. Benfield should be allowed to return to India. Leave was ultimately granted for that purpose, by a vote of 368 to 302. The supreme government were equally opposed with the directors to the conduct of Mr. Whitehill. The government were represented to have countenanced the treaty concluded by that gentleman with Bazalet Jung, whether to the extent alleged by the Madras council was not apparent, but it was clear that orders had been subsequently sent from Bengal for relinquishing the circar. The Madras government were accused of pertinaciously refusing to obey such orders, and of retaining the circar in defiance of the peremptory instructions from Calcutta. On a previous occasion, in a matter connected with the nizam, the council at Fort St. George disputed the controlling power attempted to be exercised by the supreme government, and had expressed an opinion that the latter possessed only a negative power, and that confined to two points, viz., orders for declaring war, or for making treaties, and not a positive and compelling power, extending to all political affairs. Considerable jealousy had been created in the minds of Hyder and the Nizam by the treaty; both Bazalet Jung and Hyder manifested decided intentions of hostility."

Hyder made such demonstrations of hostility, and had such means of making that hostility formidable, that the supine council might have been awakened from their apathy in time to avert the terrible consequences about to spread like a devouring flame over the fair provinces of the presidency. The nabob of the Carnatic was still more supine, if possible, than the council: nothing was either performed or attempted by him to strengthen the hands of the Madras government, or in any way prepare himself for an encounter with his formidable foe. The nizam was able to afford to Hyder such a supply of French officers and troops ostensibly in his own service that it ought to have been an object of intense concern with the government of Madras, by negotiation or money, to prevent such a junction. No real efforts to accomplish so important an object was made, and when the moment arrived for action, the

Mysorean adventurer was able to add to the elements of strength possessed by his vast and well-organized armies, this new and most dangerous one of French troops led by officers skilful in engineering and artillery, and with all the prestige of being the best disciplined troops in Europe or in Asia. The difficulties of Hastings at this juncture pass description. The company's funds in India were exhausted; the servants of every grade were in arrears for pay; the exigencies of the war in the Carnatic were exorbitant; the petty rajahs were everywhere displaying symptoms of disaffection; the insubordinate polygars of Tanjore had gone over to Hyder Ali; the vizier and other powerful native princes were murmuring and at heart disloyal; the company was importunate for money; the councils of the presidencies despaired of finding means for the annual investment. Such was the condition of India in 1781-82.

It seems to be one of the strange conditions upon which providentially the English dominion in India has depended, that it should, after the most signal seasons of prosperity and triumph, be suddenly brought to the verge of ruin, and yet emerge from danger and disaster more glorious than ever. This has so often happened as to assume the appearance of a law, and challenge the investigation of statesmen. At the period to which reference is now made, such was the state of the English power in India. After all its prestige and glory, a wild and lawless man, thrown up by the ever surging sea of Indian life, put the empire founded by Clive and consolidated by Hastings in the utmost peril; and when successive victories rolled back the tide of his conquests, the pecuniary resources of the company in India were exhausted, the native chiefs were preparing to throw off the yoke of England, and the English themselves were weakened by dissensions in their presidential councils. The genius of Hastings retrieved affairs so desperate. Where his own hand could not reach, and his own mind direct, he nominated agents adapted to the work he desired to see accomplished. Had the appointment of the men, or the procuring and management of the means, been left, at this juncture, to either the councils in India or the directors at home, all had been lost.

## CHAPTER LXXXV.

GOVERNMENT OF HASTINGS (*Continued*)—HIS EFFORTS TO RETRIEVE THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE COMPANY IN INDIA—TRANSACTIONS WITH CHEYTE SING, THE VIZIER, THE BEGUMS OF OUDE, ETC.—CENSURES PRONOUNCED BY THE DIRECTORS AND THE ENGLISH PUBLIC.

For a time, after the occurrence of the events recorded in the last chapter, Hastings directed his whole attention to finance, and made efforts of the most ingenious but daring nature to provide funds for the government.

Few of the transactions by which large sums of money were brought to the coffers of the company have been more canvassed than the expulsion of Cheyte Sing, Rajah of Benares. Lord Macaulay describes Hastings as having deliberately meditated a robbery (on behalf of the company) on this prince, whom the same authority represents as having paid regularly his tribute up to 1780-1. His lordship is very severe upon Hastings for treating a sovereign rajah in the manner he did, and for demanding money for the company for which there was no legitimate claim upon the rajah. His lordship in this case, as in almost every other to which he refers in his essays upon Clive and Warren Hastings (which are in fact essays upon Indian affairs during their governments), follows Mill, and he does so even when the means of correcting Mill by more authentic sources of information were abundantly open to him. The gist of the affair is in the real relation held by the rajah to the English government, and his own actual rights, whether implied by the title of rajah or the power or authority which he exercised. The truth was, the rajah perceived with pleasure the difficulties by which the company was surrounded, and hoped out of the dismemberment of its territories to derive for himself a sovereignty to which he had no claim. He had engaged to assist the English during the struggles with the Mahrattas and Hyder, by a body of cavalry,—a force, of which Lord Macartney declared in his correspondence with the directors, that when he assumed the government of Madras in 1781, the presidency was totally destitute. The English were especially deficient in that military arm, and relied generally for support in it upon their native allies. The people of Benares being, as compared with lower Bengal, warlike—but by no means so warlike as Lord Macaulay describes them, and as the inhabitants of Oude, Rohileund, Delhi, and the north and north-west districts generally are—it was reasonable for the English to expect that the rajah would keep faith with them in furnishing

cavalry contingents. This he did not do. He was also expected to aid the general government in any extraordinary crisis, as the very existence of his position as a prince depended upon the protection of the English. Cheyte Sing thought otherwise. He had no disposition to lend them aid in their hour of peril, and counted upon their necessity as his opportunity. Hastings was not a governor to be so treated. He determined that Benares should afford its full proportion of assistance to the general want, and he resolved to make his highness, the rajah, an example to other rajahs of the reality of English power, and the necessity of rendering a full, efficient, and zealous support to the supreme government—of, in fact, sharing its dangers as well as enjoying of its protection. The governor-general accordingly proceeded to Benares, and after undergoing desperate perils, expelled the rajah and seized the revenue. The light in which the transaction is placed by Auber is sustained by the documents upon the authority of which a historical record must be based. It is with singular brevity recorded by him in the following terms:—

“Under the treaty concluded with Sujah-ad-Dowlah in August, 1765, it was stipulated that Bulwunt Sing, a tributary of the vizier, and Rajah of Benares, should be continued in that province. On Sujah-ad-Dowlah's death in 1775, a treaty was concluded by Mr. Bristow, with his successor, Asoff-ul-Dowlah, by which all the districts dependant on Rajah Cheyte Sing, the successor of Bulwunt Sing, were transferred in full sovereignty to the company, an arrangement which had apparently given great satisfaction to Cheyte Sing and his family.

“When intelligence reached India, in 1778, of the war with France, Spain, and America, the supreme government were constrained to devise every means to augment the financial resources of the company, in order to meet the unavoidable increase of charge. As the rajah's provinces derived the advantage of the company's protection, to whom he had, in point of fact, become tributary, he was called upon to aid in the general exigency. He very reluctantly assented to a contribution of five lacs. This indisposition created an unfavourable impression on the mind of the government.

"Having been again applied to for aid during the war in the Carnatic, in the prosecution of which the government of Bengal had drained their treasury in supplies to Madras, he evinced a decided disinclination to come forward; and although he promised to contribute some aid in cavalry, not one man was forthcoming. These and other circumstances arising out of the deputation of a party from the rajah to Calcutta, determined Mr. Hastings to make known his mind to Cheyte Sing, for which purpose he proceeded to Benares on his route to meet the vizier, where he arrived on the 14th of August, 1781. It was the rajah's wish to have paid the governor-general a visit that evening, but he desired it might be postponed until a wish to that effect was communicated to the rajah.

"In the interim, the governor-general caused a paper to be forwarded to Cheyte Sing, recapitulating the points upon which he felt it necessary to animadvert. The reply of the rajah was so unsatisfactory, that orders were given to Mr. Markham, the resident, on the 15th, at ten at night, to place him in arrest the following morning: should opposition arise, he was to await the arrival of two companies of sepoys. Mr. Markham, with the troops, the following morning executed his orders. The rajah addressed a letter to Mr. Hastings, asking 'what need there was for guards? He was the governor-general's slave.' In consequence of the desire of the rajah, Mr. Markham proceeded to visit him; previous to his arrival, large bodies of armed men had crossed the river from Ramnagar. Unfortunately, the two companies who were with the resident had taken no ammunition with them. They were suddenly attacked by the assembled body of armed men and fired upon; at this moment the rajah made his escape, letting himself down the steep banks of the river, by turbans tied together, into a boat which was waiting for him. Those who effected his escape followed him. Of the two companies commanded by Lieutenant Stalker few remained alive, and those were severely wounded; Lieutenants Stalker, Scott, and Simes lying within a short distance of each other. The rajah fled from Ramnagar with his zenana to Lateefgur, a strong fort ten miles from Chunar, accompanied by every member of the family who could claim any right of succession to the raj.

"In this state of affairs, Mr. Hastings selected Baboo Assaum Sing, who had been dewan under Bulwunt Sing, to take charge of the revenues, in quality of naib, until it should be legally determined to whom the revenues belonged. The governor went to

Chunar, from whence requisitions were issued for succour from all quarters. Little aid could be effectually given, as the whole of the country was in arms, the provinces of Benares, Ramnagar, and Pateeta being in a state of war. Troops ultimately arrived under Major Popham from Cawnpore; the exertions and gallantry of that officer rescued the zemindary of Benares from the power and influence of the disaffected rajah and his adherents. His last strong fortress of Bejiegghur, from which he had escaped, was reduced and brought under subjection to the company. Baboo Narrain, a grandson of Bulwunt Sing, was proclaimed rajah in the room of Cheyte Sing."

This statement, supported by all existing documents of the rajah's position, prerogatives, and conduct, and the ground on which the claims of the governor-general rested, do not agree with the account given by Mill, upon whose authority it is obvious Lord Macaulay solely rests his estimate of the conduct of Hastings. Mr. Mill, assuring his readers of the sacred and indefeasible rights of the rajah, says:—"Whether till the time at which Benares became an appanage of the Subah of Oude, it had ever been governed through the medium of any of the neighbouring viceroys, or had always paid its revenue immediately to the imperial treasury, does not certainly appear. With the exception of coining money in his own name—a prerogative of majesty, which, as long as the throne retained its vigour, was not enfeebled by communication, and that of the administration of criminal justice, which the nabob had withdrawn, the Rajah of Benares had always, it is probable, enjoyed and exercised all the powers of government within his own dominions."

With views based upon such representations, Lord Macaulay would naturally describe any demands for assistance made by Hastings, beyond the ordinary tribute, as a robbery. Professor Wilson has, with his usual research, examined the statements of Mill, and gives the following confutation:—"This is an adoption of one of those errors upon which the charge against Mr. Hastings in regard to his relations with Cheyte Sing was founded, and which commences with the second report of the select committee, who talk of 'the expulsion of a rajah of the highest rank from his dominions.' In point of fact, however, no rajah had enjoyed and exercised the powers of government in the province of Benares since the middle of the eleventh century, at the latest. At the period of the Mohammedan conquest, it was part of the kingdom of Kanoj. It was annexed to

Delhi by the arms of Kutteh, early in the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth was included in the Mohammedan kingdom of Jonpur. In the reign of Akbar, it was comprised in the subah of Allahabad, and in that of Aurungzebe it was comprehended in that of Oude. In all this time no mention is made of a Rajah of Benares. The title originated in the beginning of the eighteenth century, or A.D. 1730, when Mansa Ram, zemindar of Gangapoor, having, in the distracted state of affairs, added largely to his authority, obtained a sunnud of rajah, from Mohammed Shah of Delhi—a mere honorary title, conferred then, as is it now, by the British government, without any suspicion of its implying princely power or territorial dominion. Mansa Ram procured the title for his son, Bulwunt Sing, who succeeded him in 1740; so that even the title was only forty years old at the time of Cheyte Sing's removal. It had never conferred independence, for the rajah had still remained a zemindar, holding under the soubahdar of Oude. It is true, that the minutes of council of various dates speak of the rajah as a sort of king, tributary, but reigning in his own right, and by the position of his supposed kingdom, calculated to be a valuable feudatory or ally of the British government. Some of this was merely vagueness of expression, some of it ignorance. The word rajah seems to have imposed even upon Hastings; certainly it did upon Clavering and his party; and language was used in allusion to Cheyte Sing, which exposed Hastings to the charge of contradiction and inconsistency. There is no vagueness or inconsistency, however, in the document upon which Cheyte Sing's whole power and right depended. The sunnud 1776, granted to the rajah by the governor and council, and which, it is to be observed, 'causes all former sunnuds to become null and void;' confers no royalties, acknowledges no hereditary rights, fixes no perpetual limit to the demands of the supreme government; but appoints him zemindar, aumeen, and fougadar of Benares and other districts. All these terms imply delegated and subordinate offices, and recognise in him nothing more than receiver of the rents, and civil and commercial judge. In the kaboolet, or assent to this sunnud, Cheyte Sing acknowledges the sovereignty of the company, and promises to pay them a certain sum, the estimated net revenue, and to preserve peace and order. Whatever, therefore, may be the fluctuating and contradictory language of the minutes of council, there is not the slightest pretext for treating the zemindar of Benares as a sovereign, however subordinate or tributary, to which he held whatever power he enjoyed. It is true that the genu-

ineness of this document was disputed by the prosecutors; and they affirmed that the sunnud was altered in compliance with the representation of Cheyte Sing, who objected to the insertion of the term 'muchulka,' and the clause annulling all former sunnuds. They could not prove, however, that any other sunnud was ever executed; and whatever might at one time have been the disposition of the council to accede to the rajah's wishes, it does not appear that any actual measure ensued. Even, however, if the omissions had been made, of which there is no proof, it is not pretended that any clause, exempting the rajah for ever from all further demands, was inserted; and this was the only material point at issue.\*

It was obvious that, in the mode which Hastings adopted in carrying out the punishment inflicted upon Cheyte Sing, and in the extent to which it was pushed, he was influenced by personal resentment. Cheyte Sing had deserved resentment; but Hastings carried it out vindictively. There can be no doubt that his policy and sense of justice were independent of his vengeful feeling, but that gave a bitterness to all he did in the transaction.

"The spirit which Hastings manifested towards Cheyte Sing was so intensely bitter, as almost to force an inquiry whether the public delinquency of this man could be the sole cause of the governor-general's hatred. This is a question which could not have been satisfactorily answered had not Hastings himself afforded the means. In enumerating the crimes of the rajah, Hastings accuses him of having entertained an intention to revolt. 'This design,' says he, 'had been greatly favoured by the unhappy divisions of our government, in which he presumed to take an open part. It is a fact, that when these had proceeded to an extremity bordering on civil violence, by an attempt to wrest from me my authority, in the month of June, 1777, he had deputed a man named Sumboonant, with an express commission to my opponent, and the man had proceeded as far as Moorsshedabad, when, hearing of the change of affairs which had taken place at the presidency, he stopped, and the rajah recalled him.† Here, then, is the key, furnished by Hastings himself, to the feelings under which he carried on his proceedings against Cheyte Sing. While the contest between himself and General Claver-

\* Minutes of Evidence, p. 69.

† Hastings's *Narrative*, printed in the Appendix to the Supplement to the Second Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Administration of Justice in India, 1782; and also in the Minutes of Evidence on the Trial of Hastings, vol. i.

ing was raging, the presumptuous rajah had ventured to dispatch a messenger to the opponent of the man who was eventually to be master of his fortunes. For four years the hatred engendered by this act had burned in Hastings's heart, when an opportunity occurred for gratifying at once the claims of public justice and of private revenge. Such an opportunity Hastings was not the man to pass by. It is not necessary to ascribe the whole of his proceedings with regard to Cheyte Sing to personal hatred. Independently of this feeling, he would probably have called upon the rajah for assistance towards carrying on the war, and he would have been justified; he would probably have visited his numerous failures with some punishment; and in this, too, he would have been justified: but in the absence of the dark passion which had so long rankled in his breast, he would have proceeded with more calmness, more dignity, and more regard to the courtesy which the rank and position of the zemindar demanded. To humble to the dust the man who had offended him was a triumph which it was not in the nature of Hastings to forego, when circumstances threw in his way the opportunity of enjoying it. He set his foot on the neck of his enemy, and was happy.

"With the explanation afforded by himself, the conduct of Hastings towards Cheyte Sing appears perfectly in accordance with his general character; but the indiscreet revelation of his feelings is remarkable, as being in striking opposition to that character. Disguise seemed to be natural to him. On all occasions he surrounded himself and his motives with mystery. Here is a striking exception. A degree of frankness, which few men in such a case would have manifested, for once marks a communication from Warren Hastings. How is this to be accounted for? By the strength of the passion which had waited years for gratification, and by the overwhelming sensation of triumph consequent on gratification when attained. Powerful must these feelings have been to overcome the caution of a man with whom concealment was not so much a habit as an instinct; which could induce him for once to lift the veil which on no other occasion was ever removed; which could lead him, unabashed and undismayed, to expose to the public eye motives and feelings of which the suggestions of the most ordinary prudence would have dictated the concealment—and this, too, at a time when, under the avowed consciousness that some parts of his proceedings required explanation, and under the humiliating sense of disappointment at the failure of his financial specula-

tions, he was seeking to disarm hostility by apology."\*

The conduct of Hastings throughout the unfortunate events at Benares, was characterised not only by his usual courage, but by an amount of cool and dauntless fortitude, such as the world has seldom witnessed. When the disaster occurred to the two companies, Hastings, with about fifty soldiers, was shut up in the residency, which the mob surrounded, cutting off all communication. The too forward valour of some English officers with Hastings, nearly brought on a conflict which would have probably issued in the destruction of his little garrison and of himself. The whole country for many miles around was in arms, and the insurrectionary spirit extended into Oude, the most turbulent part of India. Volunteers from Oude, from among the less warlike part of the population, especially hastened to join the Benares insurgents. The ruling class of Oude, the Mohammedans took little part in the disturbance, but the Brahminical devotees considered it a holy war, and nearly thirty thousand of them crossed the borders into the Benares province. Hastings, beleaguered in his little temporary fortress, not only remained perfectly calm, but acted with the cool assurance and audacity of one in a position to dictate. The fugitive rajah sent to him, beseeching, in humiliating terms, pardon and friendship, but in the meantime made no efforts to withdraw the armed rabble that beset the governor. Hastings treated with haughty disdain the rajah's overtures. He contrived to send letters, placed in the ears of certain of the natives as ear-rings, to the nearest cantonments of the British army. The troops idolized Hastings, as all the English did, and officers and men made desperate and enthusiastic efforts to hasten to his rescue. Meanwhile, Hastings wrote with the greatest coolness despatches to his agents in connection with the negotiations then going on with the Mahrattas. These despatches show the most wonderful self-reliance and self-possession. While a multitude thundered at the gates of his residence, and bullets whistled around, this indomitable man wrote with as much collectedness as if sitting in his study at government house, or dictating a revenue minute in the council chamber. The efforts of the British troops soon turned the tide of affairs, the vast mob of armed fanatics melted away, and the liberated governor with wisdom, promptitude, and stern repression, reduced to a perfect calm the anarchical elements that had raged so fiercely around him.

\* *History of the British Empire in India.* By Edward Thornton.

Cheyte Sing had placed himself beyond all hope of mercy while these events were passing. He was lifted up by the sight of the whole population of the province of Benares in arms, the thronging volunteers from Oude, and the preparation for revolt in Bahar, so that he threatened to "drive the white faces out of Bengal," and made high and peremptory demands upon Hastings. When he saw the feeble resistance made by multitudes of his co-religionists to a few English soldiers and sepoy commanded by British officers, he became panic-struck, and fled, abandoning for ever the regions he had thrown into so sudden a convulsion. The result to the company was an increase of its revenue to the amount of £200,000 sterling per annum, and a more complete dominance in the regions that had so suddenly revolted. A quarter of a million sterling was found in the treasury of Cheyte Sing, which was distributed to the troops as prize money. When tidings of the occurrences at Benares reached the directors, the court passed a resolution, that the treaty of 1775, confirmed in perpetuity to the company the zemindaree of Benares, that Cheyte Sing was to have the management of the province on paying a certain tribute; that the governor-general and council had recommended the rajah to maintain two thousand horse, but that in the opinion of the court, there was no obligations resting upon Cheyte Sing to comply with that recommendation; that the conduct of the governor-general towards him, while at Benares was improper, and that the imprisonment of his person was unwarrantable and highly impolitic, and would probably tend to weaken that confidence in the moderation and justice of the English government, which it was desirable the princes of India should feel. These tidings reached the governor-general just as he had concluded a glorious peace with Hyder, and when flushed with the success of all his enterprises, he was unlikely to endure the language of censure with his usual good temper and self-command. He at once wrote a respectful but indignant despatch to the directors, a few extracts from which will at once show the merits of the whole question as they appeared to Hastings, and the views which he took of the policy and proceedings of the directors. He considered the judgment pronounced to have issued from a party in the directory, under the influence, no doubt of the cabinet, which, anxious to grasp the patronage of India, laboured incessantly to prejudice the minds of the English public against the company's servants, believing that such prejudice would ultimately be directed to the company itself.

Hastings does not express so much in the language he employed, but his allusions and tone convey it:—"I understand that these resolutions regarding Cheyte Sing were either published or intended for publication; the authority from whence they proceed leads to the belief of the fact. Who are the readers? Not the proprietors alone, whose interest is immediately concerned in them, and whose approbation I am impelled, by every motive of pride and gratitude, to solicit, but the whole body of the people of England, whose passions have been excited on the general subject of the conduct of their servants in India; and before them I am arraigned and prejudged of a violation of the national faith in acts of such complicated aggravation, that, if they were true, no punishment short of death could atone for the injury which the interest and credit of the public has sustained in them."

M. Auber,\* condensing the letter of Hastings, thus describes and quotes its contents:—"With respect to the two thousand horse, it was not stipulated that Cheyte Sing should furnish any given number, but that what were maintained should be for the defence of the general state. He denied that Cheyte Sing was bound by no other tie than the payment of his tribute, for he was bound by the fealty of obedience to every order of the government which he served, his own letters being referred to as affording proofs. He denied that Cheyte Sing was a native prince of India, for he was the son of a collector of the revenue of that province, which his acts, and the misfortunes of his master, enabled him to convert to his own permanent and hereditary possession. 'The man whom you have just ranked among the princes of India will be astonished when he hears it—at an elevation so unlooked-for; nor less at the independent rights which he will not know how to assert, unless the example you have thought it consistent with justice, however opposite to policy, to show, of becoming his advocate against your own interests, should inspire any of your own servants to be his advisers and instructors.' Mr. Hastings referred to his narrative as explanatory of all the circumstances, and then dwelt upon the injury likely to arise from the support of a native against the government; remarking, 'it is now a complete period of eleven years since I first received the nominal charge of your affairs; in the course of that time I have had invariably to contend, not only with ordinary difficulties, but with such as most naturally arose from the opposition of those very powers

\* *Rise and Progress of British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. xi. pp. 642—644.



from whom I primarily derived my authority, and which were required for the support of it. My exertions, though applied to an unwearied and consistent line of action, have been occasional and desultory; yet I please myself with the hope that in the annals of your dominions which shall be written after the extinction of recent prejudice, this term of its administration will appear not the least conducive to the interests of the company, nor the least reflective of the honour of the British name. Had sufficient support been given, what good might have been done! You, honourable sirs, can attest the patience and temper with which I have submitted to all the indignities heaped upon me in a long service. It was the duty of fidelity which I essentially owed to it; it was the return of gratitude which I owed, even with the sacrifice of life, had that been exacted, to the company, my original masters and most indulgent patrons. There was an interval during which my authority was wholly destroyed; but another was substituted, and that, though irregular, was armed with the public belief of an influence invariably upholding it, which gave it a vigour scarcely less effectual than that of a constitutional power. Besides, your government had no external danger to agitate and discover the looseness of its composition.

"The case is now widely different; while your executive was threatened by wars with the most formidable powers of Europe, added to your Indian enemies, and while you confessedly owed its preservation to the seasonable and vigorous exertions of this government, you chose that season to annihilate its constitutional powers. You annihilated the influence of its executive members. You proclaimed its annihilation—you have substituted no other, unless you suppose it may exist, and can be effectually exercised in the body of your council at large, possessing no power of motion, but an inert submission to your commands. It therefore remains for me to perform the duty which I had assigned myself, as the final purpose of this letter, to declare, as I now most formally do, that it is my desire that you will be pleased to obtain the early nomination of a person to succeed me in the government of Fort William; to declare that it is my intention to resign your service so soon as I can do it without prejudice to your affairs, after the allowance of a competent time for your choice of a person to succeed me; and to declare that if, in the intermediate time, you shall proceed to order the restoration of Rajah Cheyte Sing to the zemindaree, from which he was dispossessed for crimes of the greatest enormity, and your

council shall resolve to execute the order, I will instantly give up my station and the service. I am morally certain that my successor, whoever he may be, will be allowed to possess and exercise the necessary power of his station, with the confidence and support of those who, by their choice of him, will be interested in his success."\*

The affairs of the Madras government led to various differences between it and the supreme government; the directors supported the Madras council against Hastings, objecting to the appointment of Mr. R. J. Sullivan by the governor-general to Hyderabad, a person whom he had nominated solely on account of his abilities and qualifications. Finally, the court supported Mr. Bristow at Oude, in opposition to the governor-general. These circumstances led Mr. Hastings to address the court in the following terms, in a letter written after that already quoted had been dispatched:—"At whatever period your decision may arrive, may the government fall into the hands of a person invested with the powers of the office, not disgraced, as I have been, with an unsubstantial title, without authority, and with a responsibility without the means of discharging it. May he, at least, possess such a portion of exclusive control as may enable him to interpose with effect on occasions which may tend to the sacrifice of your political credit."†

In reference to Mr. Sullivan, he, in a letter of still later date, observed:—"Among the many mortifications to which I have been continually subjected, there is none which I so severely feel as my concern in the sufferings of those whom my selection for the most important trusts in your service has exposed to persecution, and to censures, fines, deprivations, and dismissal from home. It is hard to be loaded with a weighty responsibility without power, to be compelled to work with instruments which I cannot trust, and to see the terrors of high authority held over the heads of such as I myself employ in the discharge of my public duties."‡

From the period when he heard of the disapproval of his conduct in reference to Cheyte Sing, Hastings was discontented, and his letters constantly breathe a sense of injury. He felt that his great services were not appreciated. Alluding, in the letter last quoted, to the helplessness of the other presidencies, and to the fact that he had saved India, he remarked:—"We have supported the other presidencies, not by scanty and ineffectual supplies, but by an anxious anticipation of all

\* Letter to Court, 20th of March, 1783.

† October, 1783.

‡ November, 1788.

their wants, and by a most prompt and liberal relief of them. We have assisted the China trade, and have provided larger investments from the presidency than it has ever furnished in any given period of the same length, from the first hour of its establishment to the present, and ample returns of wealth have been sent to England at a time when all the company's possessions in India were bearing with accumulated weight on Bengal for support against native and European enemies."

He complained bitterly of the miserable state of affairs in Oude, which he attributed to the impolicy of the company interfering with his measures.

The nature of the differences between the governor-general and the Madras government, the way in which they proceeded, and their influence upon the ultimate retirement of Hastings, are thus summed up by Edward Thornton:—"Between the governor-general and Lord Macartney there had never been much cordiality of feeling, and the difficulties in which the government of Madras was placed, tended to multiply the points of difference. The governor-general had a plan for surrendering to the nizam the Northern Circars, in consideration of a body of cavalry to be furnished by that prince. This was opposed by Lord Macartney, and was never carried into effect. Lord Macartney had, with much difficulty, obtained from the Nabob of Arcot an assignment of the revenues of the Carnatic for the support of the war. This was disapproved by the government of Bengal, and the assignment ordered to be rescinded. Before these orders were received at Madras, orders of a contrary character arrived from the court of directors. The government of Bengal, however, stubbornly refused to yield, and Lord Macartney was equally immovable. The treaty with Tippoo Sultan afforded other grounds of difference. It was disapproved by the government of Bengal, among other reasons, because it did not include the Nabob of Arcot; and a new ratification, declaring it to extend to that personage, was directed to take place. Lord Macartney again resisted; and had the governor-general possessed confidence in the stability of his own authority, some violent measures might have resulted from these disputes. But Hastings was now tottering in his seat—heavy charges were in circulation against him in England, and he had dispatched an agent (Major Scott) thither for the defence of his character and interests. The influence of Lord Macartney at home appeared to be rising as that of Hastings was declining; he continued to exercise his authority without impediment, until, in consequence chiefly of

the revocation of the orders of the court of directors relating to the assignment from Mohammed Ali, he voluntarily relinquished it, and was ultimately appointed to succeed to the office of governor-general."

When Hastings appointed Major Scott as his agent, he intimated to the directors his having done so, and at the same time declared to them that he "would suffer no person whatever to perform any act in his name that could be construed to imply a resignation of his authority, protesting against it, as on former occasions, as most unwarrantable."

Out of the transactions at Benares arose differences with Oude. The nabob vizier had so badly governed his dominions, or so faithlessly fulfilled the duties of alliance, that the insurrection in Benares derived great importance, and caused great danger by the number of his subjects that joined the masses of the insurgents. Hastings was inflamed with anger, and determined to make the nabob pay dearly for any damage caused by his neglect. Unfortunately for the nabob himself, he chose this critical juncture to urge the withdrawal of the British troops from Oude, which his father and himself had engaged the English to place there. His real object was not the removal of the troops, but as it was policy on the part of the English to keep a force in Oude, he concluded that they would still do so, even if he violated the treaty, and refused to pay for them. Hastings saw through this, and remonstrated, demanding the payment of all arrears, and the regular disbursement of the stipulated subsidy. The nabob declared that he had no money, and that his kingdom would not endure further taxation. Hastings reminded him that if his revenues were exhausted, the fault lay in the extravagance and debauchery of which the nabob had set so bad an example to his people, and hinted that if a native ruler could not make ends meet in Oude, the English could; but that the latter would never suffer Oude to be overrun by the Mahrattas, as would be the case almost as soon as the English troops disappeared, neither would he impose the cost of preserving that frontier of the British territory from foreign enemies. Oude should bear the burden of its own defences. The vizier nabob sought an interview with Hastings. He proceeded to Chunar to meet the governor-general, and arrange with him as to the payment of the troops, which, according to treaty, he was bound to maintain. The governor-general was not now satisfied, but increased his demands, on the grounds of the nabob's duty to defend the empire, the protection of which he enjoyed, and on the ground, also, that his previous delinquencies deserved punishment.

This interview between the governor-general and vizier took place on the 11th of September, 1781, and they remained for a fortnight in the picturesque fortress, discussing the condition of India, and of Oude especially; but still more especially debating the means by which the British treasury at Calcutta might be furnished with money. It was finally arranged that the nabob should pay a large sum to meet the present emergencies of the English, and, on the other hand, he was to be spared the stated expense of a large portion of the British contingent, then stationed in his dominions. The infantry brigade, and three regiments of cavalry, were to be withdrawn, a very large saving to the annual expenditure of the nabob's government. One regiment of sepoys (infantry) was to be stationed at Lucknow, but the charge to the nabob was not to exceed 25,000 rupees per mensem. The army at Cawnpore was to be statedly kept up to the strength prescribed by the treaty of 1773. All British officers, and all English pensioners upon the state of Oude, whatever their claims, were to be withdrawn. The nabob was also to resume certain jaghires, of which the English had previously possessed themselves, the united value of which was very considerable. On his part the nabob consented immediately, to supply fifty-five lacs of rupees to the company, and subsequently twenty lacs in entire liquidation of the debt due by him to the company. On the 25th of September, the vizier re-entered his capital, gloomy and dissatisfied. Every trick of negotiation to which he had resorted had been turned against him. Hastings had foiled his most cunning vakeels and subordinates with their own weapons. The conduct of Hastings in these negotiations has been much censured. The English were bound by treaty to Fuzzul Oola Khan, the Rohilla chief, who had some years before protracted the war in that country. The chief had stipulated to place at the service of the English government two or three thousand men "according to his ability." Hastings now demanded five thousand, but reduced finally the mandate to three thousand cavalry, which the khan pleaded that he did not possess, but would send two thousand cavalry, all he had, and one thousand infantry. This offer was considered contumacious. It is possible that Hastings believed it to be so, but the grounds of suspicion are strong that he was anxious for a quarrel, in order to hand over the jaghires of the khan to the nabob, as compensation for the ready money required from the latter to meet the exigencies of the Bengal treasury, then drained of its resources by its supplies to the other presidencies in their dangerous mismanagement and desperate

wars. At all events, the lands of Fuzzul Oola were made over upon paper to the vizier, on the ostensible ground that the khan had broken the treaty. Fuzzul Oola had no doubt in various ways departed from its strict letter, but the pretext or reason announced for his deposition was his refusal to supply the military force agreed upon. Hastings had actually no wish that this concession to the vizier should be of use to him. He took means to impede the execution of this clause of the treaty with the nabob, while he was actually making it; and ultimately he frustrated its fulfilment, accepting from Fuzzul Oola a fine as a substitute for confiscation.

The resumption of the jaghires by the nabob involved the ruin of his mother and grandmother, called the begums. These princesses were immensely rich, and Hastings believed that the property they held had been improperly conferred upon them by the previous nabob—that, in fact, it belonged to the reigning prince. However that might have been, the English had, by treaty, recognised the rights of the begum mother, both to her jaghires and her treasures. So ostensibly was this recognition made, that when the nabob had previously sought to plunder his relations, the English government interfered for the protection of the mother, on the ground of treaty obligation, while only remonstrating with the vizier for his treatment of the elder lady. The nabob was very desirous of obtaining the wealth, but shrunk from the odium of entirely dispossessing the royal ladies. He suggested to Hastings the propriety of leaving them in possession of their jaghires, and of accepting their treasures instead. Hastings decreed that they should lose all. This stern, hard, and un pitying decree was executed, but not until after a gallant resistance on the part of the retainers of the royal ladies. Their affairs were in the hands of two eunuchs: these, with other of the begum adherents, were incarcerated, loaded with irons. Lord Macaulay says that torture was also applied; but this is not borne out by fact. He quotes a letter written by the British resident to the officer in charge of them, to allow the nabob's agents to inflict corporal punishment upon them. But this, as Thornton shows, was never executed, and probably never intended to be so. That author, more severe on Hastings than most historians who have animadverted upon his misdeeds, conjectures that the order was intended to act merely *in terrorem*, so as to induce the incarcerated men to comply with the requisitions of their persecutors. Torture, as the term is employed, was not applied; but great severity was inflicted. Hastings justified

his conduct throughout this last class of transactions by the allegation that the begums were enemies of British power in India, that they abetted Cheyte Sing, and assisted the insurrection in Benares. When public discussion was raised in England concerning his conduct towards the princes of Oude, Sir Elijah Impey suggested to him the importance of supporting the allegation of political intrigue against the begums by affidavits. Hastings gladly availed himself of this suggestion, and of the active services of Sir Elijah in taking the depositions. These were rendered in a remarkable manner. The judge hurried off to the provinces which had been the scenes of the alleged misconduct of the begums, and took the affidavits in the forms of Mohammedan, Brahminical, and Christian attestation, according to the religion of the witnesses. A vast pile of documents, most damnatory to the begums, was thus procured; nor would there have been any difficulty in obtaining any number of sworn testimonies which the governor deemed necessary to his object. It does not appear, however, that Hastings countenanced any methods to obtain false testimony, and it is possible that he credited the evidence upon which he made the allegations originally. The facts contained in the affidavits were at the time notorious, although they were years after denied in the British parliament by men who were seeking to ruin Hastings, for the means he employed to save the Indian empire. Public opinion in England treated the whole affair as an imposture—a corrupt contrivance between the judge and the governor to bolster up a case from first to last guilty and disgraceful.

Another circumstance connected with the interview between the vizier and the governor-general at Chunar has been made the occasion of severe reflections upon the latter. The nabob offered his excellency a present of ten lacs of rupees; he accepted it, and passed the money to the company's account.\* This, however, he did not make known to the company for some months after, which Lord Macaulay considers as a ground for suspicion as to the integrity of his motives. Mr. Thornton attributes the concealment to the love of mystery with which he thinks Hastings invariably enveloped all his transactions. Motives of policy probably induced the temporary concealment; but Hastings never intended to apply it to his own use. He, however, felt that the close of his power was approaching, that public prejudice in England was fast rising to a dangerous pitch against

\* He had previously acted in a similar manner in the case of Cheyte Sing.

the company's servants in India, and that he, probably, would be made the scape-goat, and he was anxious to secure this sum for his own defence upon his return to England, if the directors could be induced to concede it. Possibly this circumstance had some influence in the delay which attended his communication to the company, that this sum had been paid to their account. He, at last, in a letter to the secret committee, asked permission to keep it. This they refused. His mortification was intense, for he was not rich, and no governor had ever enriched his sovereign by his measures, in any age, as Warren Hastings had enriched the Indian treasury of the company. Like Clive, he had saved India for them, and they grudged him both the glory and what he considered equitable pecuniary reward. It was from Patna, in January, 1782, that he addressed the court on the subject of this donation, in the following letter:—"I accepted it without hesitation, and gladly, being entirely destitute both of means and credit, whether for your service or the relief of my own necessities. It was made, not in specie, but in bills. What I have received has been laid out in the public service, the rest shall be applied to the same account. The nominal sum is ten lacs of rupees, Oude currency. As soon as the whole is completed, I shall send you a faithful account of it, resigning the disposal of it entirely to the pleasure of your honourable court. If you shall adjudge the disposal to me, I shall consider it as the most honourable apportionment and reward of my labours, and I wish to owe my fortune to your bounty. I am now in my fiftieth year: I have passed thirty-one years in your service. My conscience allows me boldly to claim the merit of zeal and integrity, nor has fortune been unpropitious to their exertions. To these qualities I bound my pretensions. I shall not repine if you shall deem otherwise of my services; nor ought your decision, however it may disappoint my hope of a retreat adequate to the consequence and elevation of the office which I now possess, to lessen my gratitude for having been so long permitted to hold it, since it has, at last, permitted me to lay up a provision with which I can be contented in a more humble station."

On the 22nd of May, from Calcutta, he again wrote, accounting for the money which he had received for the company, and applied to its use, from the month of October, 1780, to August, 1781, amounting to nineteen lacs sixty-four thousand rupees (nearly £200,000). Unfortunately, the ship *Lively*, by which this letter was intended to have been dispatched to Europe, was delayed, and necessarily the

letter also, which turned out to the subsequent disadvantage of the writer.

On the 15th of January, 1783, the directors wrote to the governor-general, stating that they were prevented, by a prohibitory act of parliament, from applying the ten lacs in the way he requested. The directors may have so interpreted "the regulation act;" but there was no claim which hindered their giving the money to Hastings: they chose to accept it themselves. The answer of the directors was an evasion and a mean one. In Gleig's *Life of Hastings*, a letter is published addressed by him to his agent, Major Scott, in which the following passage sets forth fully the views and feelings of the writer on this matter:—"I am neither a prude nor a hypocrite. Had I succeeded, as I had reason to expect, in the original objects of my expedition, I should have thought it, perhaps, allowable to make some provision for myself when I had filled the company's treasury; but I am disappointed. I have added, indeed, a

large income to the company's revenue, and if Mr. Middleton (resident at Lucknow) does his duty, I have provided for the early payment of the debt due from the nabob vizier to the company. But these are not acquisitions of *éclat*. Their immediate influence is not felt, and will not be known at all until long after the receipt of these despatches. It will be known that our receipts from Benares were suspended for three months, and during as long a time at Lucknow. It will be known that the pay and charges of the temporary brigade have been thrown upon the company, and that all the nabob's pensioners have been withdrawn; but the effect of my more useful arrangement, thanks to Mr. Middleton, yet remains to be accomplished. I return to an empty treasury, which I left empty. I will not suffer it to be said, that I took more care of my own interests than of the public, nor that I made a sacrifice of the latter to the former."\*

## CHAPTER LXXXVI.

GOVERNMENT OF HASTINGS (*Concluded*)—TREATY WITH THE MAHRATTAS—INSUBORDINATION OF THE COUNCILS OF BOMBAY AND MADRAS—DISSENSIONS IN SUPREME COUNCIL—HASTINGS RESIGNS THE GOVERNMENT—SCHEMES OF THE MAHRATTAS—PREPARATIONS FOR THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DEPARTURE—HASTINGS LEAVES INDIA.

WHILE Hastings was at Chunar, communications reached him from Madagee Scindiah, which led to a better feeling with the Mahrattas. Colonel Muir was ordered by Hastings to form a treaty with Scindiah, which he effected on the basis of instructions sent by Hastings on the 13th of October. That chief acted as mediator between the English and Hyder Ali, but the time was not ripe for the full development of events between the powers of Mysore and Calcutta. Peace, however, was concluded with the Mahrattas by the treaty of Salbey, May 17th, 1782,\* Scindiah having been the means of bringing to pass this desirable event, Ragoba, concerning whom the conflict arose, had an allowance of 25,000 rupees per month guaranteed to him. By the treaty of Salbey, the Peishwa bound himself on behalf of the whole of the Mahratta states not to tolerate the erection of factories by any European nations except the English. The two men who held at that time chief power among the Mahrattas, was Scindiah, and Nana Farnavese, the prime minister of the Peishwa.

\* Printed Treaties, p. 518.

The treaty of Salbey did not give satisfaction at Bombay; the council was jealous of that of Bengal as supreme council, and pointed out to the directors that the abridged power of the Bombay presidency in deference to that of Bengal, and the diminution of territory caused by the treaty, would enfeeble and impoverish that presidency, and require remittances from England or from Bengal annually. They also intimated that as Bombay was contiguous to the most powerful Mahratta tribes, it was the most suitable of the three presidencies in which to maintain a large military force.

The differences between the councils at Madras and Bengal were still more prominent than those between Bengal and Bombay. From the arrival of Lord Macartney to the retirement of Hastings, those feuds became more and more bitter. It was intended by the company to nominate his lordship governor-general, upon the retirement of Hastings.

\* *Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings first Governor-General of Bengal*. Compiled from original papers by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, A.M., vol. ii. p. 438.

This had been communicated to him, and had the effect of making him insubordinate and ambitious. He seemed to think it necessary to prove his qualifications for his future post by contravening all the acts of its present possessor, which in any way came within the scope of his resistance. As Hastings was not a man to be trifled with, his modes of procedure were energetic, prompt, and summary, so that Madras and Bengal resembled two independent European settlements, between which a state of peace was barely maintained by the authority of the country they represented.

The proceedings in England during the parliamentary discussions of 1783 upon the introduction of Fox's India bill, re-acted upon the insubordinate presidencies of Bombay and Madras, strengthening their disposition to defy or thwart the supreme council, and more especially the governor-general, who, although he had the faculty of attaching strongly to himself the great mass of the civil servants, military, and other European residents, was hated by the class of servants occupying the highest posts. His fertile and active mind was continually engaged upon some expedient to correct their imperfect transaction of public business, or to avert the consequences of their want of political aptitude. This, of course, placed him in the position of a censor perpetually, no matter how graceful the courtesy with which he endeavoured to carry out his re-arrangements and counter orders. Hence this class of civil servants, and sometimes the superior military and naval officers, were constantly reminded of their own mediocrity and of his statesmanship, intelligence, and marvellous acquaintance with Indian affairs. However these men loved their country and wished its success, and even were ready to die for it on the field, they were not disposed to see their ideas of their own consequence and dignity so completely ignored, as they were when Hastings quietly undid performances of which they were proud, or listened with an indifference scarcely concealed by politeness to opinions which he knew to be worth no consideration. His calm resolution to overrule all imperfect administration and unwise political contracts and decisions, and carry out government in a way adapted to native prejudice, and deal with surrounding states on broad principles of policy, such as the existing state of things required, was not comprehended by these men, and they considered their rights infringed by usurpation, and the councils set at naught by the dominancy of a single will. Hastings was always really solicitous to please and soothe the mediocrities, and often succeeded won-

derfully: if he had not, he could not have conducted the government of India at all. It was impossible, however, to do so when these men had all their own prejudices fostered and encouraged by such able men as Francis, such energetic men as Clavering, or such an ambitious and influential person as Lord Macartney. Such men were intellectually and by position too powerful not to collect around them and enlist under their banner all the nonentities of the upper ranks of Indian civil and military life, by flattering their prejudices and appearing to espouse their cause against an autocrat who, however eminent, was not always successful, and, at all events, was not infallible. When the news reached India of the comments made upon the conduct of public affairs in India by Hastings, every petty consequential member of the presidential councils affected an air of wisdom, and made a point of moralizing upon those transactions in which the equity of Hastings had been questioned before the bar of public opinion in England. The directors generally censured the policy of Hastings, without setting it aside. They wished to profit by its results, for it was obviously in their interest, but at the same time they were anxious to stand well with the public in England, which took superficial views of the events in which Hastings had been engaged. The directors had also to study the wishes and opinions of government, ever on the watch to grasp if possible the patronage of the government of India. Dreading the encroachments of the crown and parliament, the directors were constantly trimming between their own direct interests in the East, and the necessity of conciliating the ministry of the crown. They were secretly pleased with what Hastings had done to increase or ensure their annual investments and enlarge their sphere of territorial revenue, yet they affected to condemn his measures, lest the government should make their approval a pretext for depriving them of power. Some of the directors were in the interest of the cabinet, and hardly disguised the fact. Hastings, like Clive, had a far better chance of fair play, justice, and support from the proprietary of the company, than from the directors. Many of his opponents in India acted from what they supposed to be the wish of the directors, which they represented Hastings as controlling, unlawfully, by his arrogant will and overbearing abilities. Under such circumstances, it was no wonder if, upon receipt of the tidings of attack upon Hastings in the English press and parliament, the self-sufficient and empty men in India who had crept up to high office by seniority, should take advantage of the encouragement afforded them not only to

oppose but to revile the governor-general, although the only man in India in the English interest thoroughly acquainted with its multifarious peculiarities, its governments, languages, the modes of thinking of its peoples, the policy of its princes, and the relations of the company to all the intricate and complicated interests prevailing within and around the Indian possessions.

During 1782-3 the council of Bengal sometimes assisted Hastings heartily; but at other times they displayed a spirit of opposition, according as tidings reached them from home of the fluctuating influence of Hastings there. It is difficult to account for the apparently capricious opposition or support sometimes displayed by this strangely composed group of men. The senior was Mr. Wheler; next to him was Mr. Macpherson, formerly agent to the Nabob of Arcot; then Mr. Stables, who had been, like Mr. Wheler, a director—and who, like that gentleman, brought with him to the council exaggerated ideas of his own importance from that circumstance. The opinions entertained by Hastings concerning this trio are upon record, and may well afford instruction, as well as amusement, to the curious in Anglo-Indian history. In a letter to his English agent, Major Scott, he wrote: "You will wonder that all my council should oppose me; so do I. But the fact is this; Macpherson and Stables have intimidated Wheler, whom they hate, and he them most cordially. Macpherson, who is himself all sweetness, attaches himself everlastingly to Stables, blows him up into a continual tremour, which he takes care to prevent from subsiding: and Stables, from no other cause that I know, opposes me with a rancour so uncommon, that it extends even to his own friends, if my wishes chance to precede his own in any proposal to serve them. In council he sits sulky and silent, waiting to declare his opinion when mine is recorded, or if he speaks, it is to ask questions of cavil, or to contradict, in language not very guarded, and with a tone of insolence which I should ill bear from an equal, and which often throws me off the guard of my prudence; for, my dear Scott, I have not that collected firmness of mind which I once possessed, and which gave me such a superiority in my contests with Clavering and his associates."\* In the same letter, Hastings writes:—"I stay most reluctantly on every account, for my hands are as effectually bound as they were in the year 1775, but with this difference, that there is no lead substituted to mine."†

That the minds of the council were influ-

enced by the attacks made upon Hastings at home, he assured Major Scott, in his correspondence, that he had unequivocal proof. These men, instead of doing their duty to the company and their country, as the governor did according to his views of duty, merely managed their own interests and prospects so as to be compromised in no way by Hastings, however just his views or conduct. A manly, patriotic view of their obligations to stand by their chief, when according to their conscience he did right, does not seem to have actuated them at all. Wheler confessed to the president that he dared not support him from fear of the prejudice against him in England, which was worked up by the ministry, and such as hoped to profit by tearing the government of India from the hands of the company. Hastings, in one of his letters, tells Scott what Wheler had admitted, and then adds:—"As to the other two, they received an early hint from their friends not to attach themselves to a fallen interest, and they took the first occasion to prove that if I was to be removed, their removal was not to follow as a necessary consequence of their connection with me, by opposing me on every occasion, on the most popular grounds, on the plea of economy and obedience of orders, which they apply indiscriminately to every measure which I recommend, and Mr. Stables with a spirit of rancour which nothing can equal but his ignorance. His friend, with the most imposing talents and an elegant and unceasing flow of words, knows as little of business as he does, and Mr. Wheler is really a man of business; yet I cannot convince him of it, nor persuade him to trust to his own superiority. He hates them, and is implicitly guided by them, and so he always will be by those who command him, and possess at the same time a majority of voices."\*

Towards the close of 1783, Hastings proposed the abolition of the British residency in Oude, and the surrender of all interference there with the government of the vizier. It is not easy to see the motive of this. The reasons assigned by Hastings are not convincing. Probably there were motives of a public nature beneath the surface which influenced him, but it was at the time generally attributed to personal resentments against men employed in the British agency at the court of Oude. The council opposed his plan, but he prevailed and immediately adopted means to carry out his purpose. The governor, for some reason, was desirous of meeting the vizier, and proposed to the council to go in person. This proposal was resisted by them, but at last conceded, and on the 17th of February, 1784, he proceeded on his journey. The

\* Gleig's *Memoirs of Hastings*, vol. iii. pp. 121, 122.

† *Ibid.* p. 129.

\* Gleig's *Memoirs of Hastings*, vol. iii. pp. 145, 146.

necessity of coming to some arrangement with the vizier for the payment of his obligations to the company was urgent, for he had incurred fresh debts by arrears, to the amount of half a million sterling. His country was in danger of famine, and the financial affairs of his government were utterly embarrassed. The governor gave him sound counsel—formed plans for his extrication, and withdrew all interference on the part of the company with the government of Oude. He caused to be given back to the begums the jaghires which had been wrested from them at his own instigation; and it is a curious circumstance, that in a letter to Mrs. Hastings, published in Gleig's *Memoirs*, he describes the begums as in his interest, yet they had originally been denounced by him as enemies and traitors, as a ground for depriving them of their property. This has been severely commented upon by various writers, and almost bitterly by Edward Thornton; but so rapid were the changes of policy among oriental princes and politicians, that an enemy in one year, or month, might be a fervently ally in the next. Hastings may have been right on both occasions in the contradictory accounts given of them.

While at Lucknow, he was met by Prince Mirza Jewar Leander Shah, heir-apparent of the Mogul. The object of the prince in seeking the interview, and the conduct of Hastings towards him, are thus described by M. Auber:†—"His object was to be enabled to return to his father's court with suitable attendants, and to have a jaghire equal to the amount granted to him during the administration of Meerza Nudjiff Cawn, and to be employed against the Sikhs. In order to preclude the appearance of a distinction to which the Mogul's known affection for his younger son, Meerza Ackbar Shah, might raise some objection, he requested his brother might be employed in a similar service in some other quarter. Mr. Hastings being constrained to quit Benares, left his body-guard to support the prince. The vizier also agreed to allow him four lacs per annum. It appeared that the Mogul had received but one lac and a half for his support in the preceding year, and that it was the object of the prince to obtain some increase of allowance for his father. Mr. Hastings then explained the feelings which had operated on his mind. He was persuaded that the court would have experienced the same."

The letter of the governor-general to the directors is beautiful and touching, display-

ing the deep susceptibilities which lay beneath the cold surface of the astute politician. The way in which he puts a transaction which might be censured by the calculating directors is eloquent and persuasive, justifying the opinion of his old enemy Francis, that there was no resisting the pen of Hastings. Having reasoned with his employers on the rightness of acting as he had done to the heir of the Mogul throne, he adds:—"Or let it be, if it is such, the same weakness of compassion that I did when I first met the prince on the plains of Mohawer, without state, without attendance, with scarce a tent for his covering, or a change of raiment, but that which the recent effect of hospitality had furnished him, and with the expression of a mind evidently struggling between the pride of inherent dignity, and the conscious sense of present indigence and dependence. Had his subsequent conduct developed a character unworthy of his high birth, had he appeared vain, haughty, mean, insolent, or debased by the vices which almost invariably grow on the minds of men born to great pretensions, unpractised in the difficulties of common life, and not only bred, but by necessity of political caution familiarised to the habits of sloth and dissipation, I could have contented myself by bestowing on him the mere compliment of external respect, and consulted only the propriety of my own conduct, nor yielded to the impulse of a more generous sentiment. I saw him almost daily for six months, in which we were either participators of the same dues of hospitality, or he of mine. I found him gentle, lively, possessed of a high sense of honour, of a sound judgment, an uncommon quick penetration, and a well-cultivated understanding, with a spirit of resignation, and an equanimity of temper almost exceeding any within the reach of knowledge or recollection."

On the 22nd of November, 1784, Hastings, worn out by opposition, his mind wearied, and his body enfeebled, wrote, requesting to be relieved from his cares of office. He alluded to his letter of the 30th of March, 1783, when he made a similar request. The court of proprietary in London had overborne both the court of directors and the house of commons, in a firm determination to retain and support him in his authority. This, however, neither secured him from attack at home, nor opposition from his colleagues in government. He accordingly addressed a letter to the directors, which throws a full light upon the state of English interests in India at that time, his own relation to them, and the causes by which both were produced:—"If the next regular advices shall contain either the express acceptance of my resignation of the service, or

† *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, vol. i. pp. 682-3.



your tacit acquiescence, I shall relinquish my office to the gentleman who stands next to me in the prescribed order of succession, and return to England as soon as the ship *Berrington* can be made ready to sail. My constitution, though naturally not of the strongest texture, yet for many years retained so uniform an exemption from positive disorder as not to require one day of grace from my official employment, is now so much enfeebled by the severe illness with which I was attacked in the year 1782, that it is no longer capable in any degree of those exertions to which it was formerly equal, and which were at no time sufficient for the discharge of all the duties which my place exacted of me. Nor am I the only diseased part of it. It is itself disordered. Witness the cruel necessity which compelled me for nine months to abandon the seat of government itself (referring to his visit to Lucknow), and all the weighty occupations of it, to attend to one portion of its charge, which, under a sounder constitution, might have been better conducted and with fuller effect by orders known to proceed from competent authority to enforce them. I do not believe this government will ever be invested with its proper powers till I am removed from it, nor can it much longer subsist without them. I am therefore a hurtful incumbrance on it, and my removal, whenever or however effected, will be a relief to it."

Before he could execute his determination to quit the country, various occurrences took place which exercised considerable influence over the future. Madagee Scindiah, the great Mahratta, obtained from the Mogul, for the Peishwa, the high imperial office of Vakeel-ul-Mulluck, which gave him a supreme control in the foreign administration of the empire. This had long been an object of ambition with the Mahrattas. Scindiah himself sought the appointment of grand naib or deputy of the Vakeel-ul-Mulluck.

In consequence of the perpetual complaints of the directors as to the charges for the government of Bengal, the governor-general organized efficient means of retrenchment. One of the most interesting incidents connected with the close of his government was his review of the sepoy troops which had returned from the war in the Carnatic. Twice, under circumstances which made the act adventurous, Hastings sent sepoys from Bengal to make war in South-western India. It has been already shown how he dispatched to the Bombay presidency a force of sepoys. That wise and adventurous act was performed against the opinion of his council. Not less than seven thousand men, attended by more than thirty thousand camp followers, began

that memorable march, which they prosecuted with persistence and fidelity. Hastings knew that they would never consent to go by sea, in consequence of their class prejudices, and he determined to launch them forth upon the sunburnt plains of Bengal, and to send them through the rocky ravines of the Deccan, and across the great southern rivers, until they poured forth their force with effect upon the shores of Malabar. On the second occasion, when Madras was in imminent danger of falling before Hyder Ali, he sent five regiments eleven hundred miles along the coast of Coromandel, and opposed them to the disciplined troops of France with success. They returned in four years, just before the governor-general's departure. They were called out for review; and as the governor-general rode down the lines, he was received with an enthusiasm such as European soldiers have not surpassed when some great chief, who had often led them to battle and to victory, presented himself to inspect their lines. Hastings, dressed as a civilian, rode along the ranks, his head uncovered, while wild acclamations of attachment rose in the course of his progress. The address of Hastings, on that occasion, was characteristic, displaying his capacity to adapt himself to all classes of natives. It was received by his sable soldiers with almost frantic delight, and its language was transmitted, with astonishing accuracy, from father to son among the Rajpoot sepoys, for many years. Even yet the old sepoys of Bengal talk of Hastings, and his address to the native heroes who went forth to the wars in the Carnatic, with delight and pride; just as the native women all over Bengal, from the remotest parts of the upper provinces to the marshy shores of the Bay of Bengal, sing to their children of the great sahib Warren Hastings, the number of his horses and his elephants, the richness of his trappings, and the splendour of his train.

The success of the sepoy brigades which the governor sent to Western and Southern India is often quoted as a proof that the Bengal sepoys do not deserve the reprobation which many modern writers pour upon them, and the authority of Hastings is quoted as justifying the unreasoning reliance placed upon the sepoys who, in 1857, revolted in a mutiny so extensive and determined. The cases have no parallel. Hastings chose his black soldiers from among the Rajpoots, the most gallant and high-spirited race in India, a military class, faithful to the military chief or government they serve, so long as that government preserves its compact with them. The Bengal army which mutinied in 1857 was more Brahminical than military. It was an army of

religious fanatics, whether Brahmin or Mussulman; and in India, the more religious the man, the worse he is as a soldier or a servant. The religions of the Brahmin and the high Mussulman constrain to acts which unfit them for faithful officials or constant soldiers. The Bengal army of 1857 had been chosen mainly from Oude and Agra, from certain Mohammedan and certain Brahminical districts, where the fanaticism of the people, from various causes, is more intense than anywhere else in India. So far from these soldiers being like the sepoy of Hastings—the gallant Rajpoots of 1780-85—there exists a hatred to the latter among the Oude sepoy, even marriage connection with them being forbidden, except to the members of two small Rajpoot tribes, who are contiguous to Oude.

A writer of some popularity, and who, at the time he wrote, had no such comparison as is here instituted before his mind, thus describes the sanguinary bigotry and fanaticism of the Oudeans in one particular aspect of it, which exemplifies the assertion that the sepoy of 1857 and those of 1781 were men of different mould:—"A respectable landowner of this place, a Sombunsie, tells me, that the custom of destroying their female infants has prevailed from the time of the first founder of their race; that a rich man has to give food to many Brahmins, to get rid of the stain, on the twelfth or thirteenth day, but that a poor man can get rid of it by presenting a little food in due form to the village priest; that they cannot give their daughters in marriage to any Rajpoot families save the rhatorees and chauhans; that the family of their clan who gave a daughter to any other class of Rajpoots would be excluded from caste immediately and for ever; that those who have property have to give all they have with their daughters to the chauhans and rhatorees, and reduce themselves to nothing, and can take nothing from them in return; as it is a great stain to take 'kuneea dan,' or virgin price, from any one; that a Sombunsie may, however, when reduced to great poverty, take the 'kuneea dan' from the chauhans and rhatorees for a virgin daughter, without being excommunicated from the clan; but even he could not give a daughter to any other clan of Rajpoots without being excluded for ever from caste; that it was a misfortune, no doubt, but it was one that had descended among them from the remotest antiquity, and could not be got rid of; that mothers wept and screamed a good deal when their first female infants were torn from them, but after two or three times giving birth to female infants, they became quiet and reconciled to the usage, and said, 'do as you like;' that some poor

parents of their clan did certainly give their daughters for large sums to wealthy people of lower clans, but lost their caste for ever by so doing; that it was the dread of sinking in substance from the loss of property, and in grade from the loss of caste, that alone led to the murder of female infants; that the dread prevailed more or less in every Rajpoot clan, and led to the same things, but most in the clan that restricted the giving of daughters in marriage to the smallest number of clans."\*

These were not the men from whom the sepoy of Hastings were enlisted. He knew better than to put so high a confidence in men of the stamp that committed, in 1857, the atrocities of Delhi and Cawnpore.

On the 10th of January, 1785, Hastings wrote to the directors, apprising them that his advices from England rendered it essential for him to retire from the government. In this letter occurs the following remarkable, it may perhaps be called extraordinary passage, when all the antecedents of Hastings as governor-general are considered:—"I conceive it now to be impossible for your commands to require my stay on the terms which I might have had the presumption to suppose within the line of possibility: were such to be your pleasure, it is scarcely possible for your commands, on any subject which could concern my stay, to arrive before the season required for my departure. I rather feel the wish to avoid the receipt of them, than to await their coming; and I consider myself in this act as the fortunate instrument of dissolving the frame of an inefficient government, pernicious to your interests and disgraceful to the national character, and of leaving one in its stead, such as my zeal for your service prompts me to wish perpetual, in its construction to every purpose efficient."

Hastings now made energetic preparations for departure. Mrs. Hastings had been sent before, and it was reported that she retired from the shores of India burdened with the most costly presents: jewels, the rarest and most brilliant, the most exquisite carvings in ivory, the gold work of Benares, and even specie, were said to have been lavished by rich natives and the Indian princes upon one whose influence over Hastings was so great. It was generally believed that he knew but little of these magnificent gifts, the reception of which, it was believed by the English at Calcutta, he would have prevented. When the period for his departure arrived, the consternation of some of the native princes surpassed the joy of those who were enemies of England, and even the astonishment of all. The sepoy idolized the great sahib as they

\* Sleeman's *Journey through Oude*.

had previously adored Clive. The English regarded Hastings with a profound affection and respect, and they now gave vent to these feelings in the most demonstrative manner. Mr. Hastings delivered up the keys of Fort William and of the treasury to Mr. Macpherson, in the council-chamber, on the 1st of February. That gentleman succeeded as governor-general, under the provisions of the acts of the 13 and 21 Geo. III., and took his seat on the 3rd. From motives of respect to Mr. Hastings, the council determined that the ceremonial of succession should not take place until the *Berrington* had sailed. A letter from Mr. Hastings, dated on board, the 8th of February, announcing her departure, having been received at Calcutta, the proclamation of the new government was made with the usual formalities.

When Hastings was about to retire, numerous addresses were presented to him both by English officials, military men, and residents; the natives vied with the British in the mode of marking their respect. When he proceeded to the place of embarkation, an immense crowd lined the way which his carriage and suite traversed. Numerous barges attended his departure down the Hoogly, and it was not until the pilot left the ship, and the coasts of Bengal were dim in the distance, that some of the attached followers of Hastings returned to the Hoogly. During the voyage his active mind employed itself in his favourite pursuit—literature. He read much during the long voyage, and produced several compositions, one of which obtained much notoriety and some praise—an imitation of Horace's *Otium Divos rogat*. This was dedicated to Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, one of the most useful and gifted public men who had served the company in India, and who, after a most laborious and skilful organization of the revenue in Bengal, and long years of statesmanlike labour, had returned to Europe only a month before his friend. The ex-governor-general, who landed in June, 1785, at Plymouth, proceeded at once to London, where he was received by crown and company with high distinction. In another chapter his home perils and vicissitudes, which were imminent and extraordinary, will be recorded; it is here only necessary to give a brief and general view of the estimation in which his services in India, and his character as developed by those services, are held in the present day. Probably, Miss Martineau has, with more brevity, and in terms more expressive than any other writer, conveyed the general estimate of this great man, and of his fortunes, in the following passage:—"He committed

crimes, and inflicted misery, as unnecessarily (according to modern opinion) as wickedly. But, these crimes apart, he was a great benefactor to both countries by amalgamating them to a greater extent than any other man had done, or than any other could have done. He was the first governor of India who could and did converse with any natives in their own tongue. He was the first who opened the potent and mild resources of intellectual sympathy, by cultivating and honouring oriental literature, and interesting the best minds of Europe in the history of our native subjects in Hindostan. He made the way easier for future governors, and finished with his own strong hand the revolutionary period which perhaps no other could have brought to a close. It is impossible to esteem him, and it is impossible not to admire him. Without any appearance of a conscience, and with nearly as little indication of a heart, he had a most effective understanding, and deserved whatever praise can be commanded by vigorous and patient resolution, and a life of strenuous purposes carried out in unfaltering action. He could hardly have been a happy man at any time; but he was strong and collected enough to keep his foes at bay, and win a final victory over them in the form of an acquittal from charges for which he had in fact undergone a protracted punishment of disgrace and suspense. He won royal favour, and a good deal of popular admiration; was made a privy councillor and the idol of the street; and he died, Hastings of Daylesford. He would probably have confessed in some soft hour of sunset, under the old oaks, that he did not enjoy them so much after the heavy price he had paid for them as when, in his childhood, he dreamed of possessing them, without a thought of guilt to be risked in the acquisition of them."

However eloquently correct this expression of the views taken of Hastings generally in the present day may be, there is just ground for exception to many of the dicta pronounced. It is not true that Hastings committed crimes for which he saw no necessity. No necessity of state, or of the individual, can, of course, justify a crime; but in some of the instances in which Hastings sinned, and sinned grievously, he was deceived by his own casuistry; he believed that a great necessity at least extenuated his guilt. He did evil that good might come. He supposed, in some cases, that the vast benefits to be ensured by a policy which was not equitable or moral, compensated for the misdeeds. This unrighteous, and because unrighteous impolitic, principle has been avowed by many statesmen and divines who

have been ready enough to censure the conduct of Warren Hastings. They have themselves, under far less temptation and less pressure of difficulty and danger, pursued a similar policy, and adopted a similar justification with an effrontery of which Hastings had set no example; for while it is evident that his mind was beguiled by the idea that the end sanctified the deed, he did not suppose himself wholly under the influence of such a principle. He always acted upon an avowal of abstract justice, and where no principle of equity was involved, he supported his policy by its utility to the government, and its beneficial influence upon the governed. It is impossible to wade through the debates and minutes in council, in which Hastings participated, especially when he was the chief support of Governor Vansittart, as the author of this History has done, without perceiving that the mind of Hastings was ever open to an appeal founded upon justice. Miss Martineau deems it impossible to esteem him; yet no Englishman in India ever excited an esteem so universal. Nor is it true that he was "without any appearance of a conscience, and with nearly as little indication of a heart," as his resistance to tyranny during the government of Vansittart proves against the one accusation, and his devoted friendships and home attachments prove against the other. One of the last acts of Hastings was an act of touching friendship. His last letter, written only a few hours before death, was worthy of a man both of heart and conscience.

When at Daylesford, he enjoyed the *otium cum dignitate*. There are no facts known connected with the life of Hastings to prove the probability of Miss Martineau's supposition, that he looked back with such pain upon his public acts as disturbed the quietude of his repose—a supposition in itself absurd on the part of a writer who believed he had no conscience. Miss Martineau follows too closely in the train of Lord Macaulay, from whom her views, favourable and unfavourable, of Hastings were too implicitly drawn: just as his lordship accepted too easily the statements and opinions of Mill, which—however softened and qualified by him—he in the main followed. Hastings, although a great man, was probably not quite so great as he is generally supposed to have been; and was certainly a better man than it is now the fashion to depict him. It would be impossible in a religious or even merely ethical acceptation to call him a good man; but posterity will doubtless mitigate the stern judgment of the present generation upon him, while, to the latest times, his government of India, his self-reliance, courage, energy, and talents will be an admiration and a wonder. It may be long before the moral portrait of him, painted by one (Lord Macaulay) whom Bulwer\* calls "the Titian of English prose," shall cease to fill the mind of the reading public; but a time will arrive, when in spite of all that is reprehensible in him, a more agreeable as well as just conception will be formed.

## CHAPTER LXXXVII.

### WAR WITH HYDER ALI OF MYSORE—HIS INVASION OF THE CARNATIC—HIS DEVASTATIONS, VICTORIES, CRUELTY, AND DEATH.

ON former pages the imbecility of the governments of Bombay and Madras, especially of the latter, during the time when Warren Hastings was governor-general of India, has been depicted; and it was stated that in consequence of the insubordination of the council of Madras to the supreme council, Hyder and the French were permitted without opposition, and to a great extent without suspicion, to form an intimate alliance—the former organizing a vast army, to a considerable extent on French principles of tactics and discipline, and with the aid of French officers. He was also allowed, without being impeded by any countervailing address on the part of the council, to negotiate alliance with the Mah-

rattas, and thus to engage on his side the most powerful people among the natives of India. The object of Hyder was not simply ambition; vengeance had also a place in his motives. He had made various stipulations with the English, who had injured and insulted him almost in every case with scandalous breach of treaty. Notice has been taken on previous pages of the bad faith of the English, who were mainly influenced in deserting Hyder by fear of provoking the powerful Mahrattas, and by a reluctance to incur the censure of the directors at home, who were constantly anxious lest their councils should

\* *What will he do with it?* vol. i. p. 91. By Pisiistratus Caxton.

embroil them with the native potentates by alliances and treaties, offensive and defensive. In 1767 the council of Madras made a treaty of this nature with Hyder, after he had passed in swift conquest over the Carnatic, and threatened Madras itself. When next he was at war with the Mahrattas, the English refused to fulfil their agreements, and he from that hour hated them. In 1778, when again menaced by the Mahrattas, Hyder appealed to the English to fulfil their treaty, they again violated their honour, and inflamed the hatred of the prince they had thus betrayed, to an almost intolerable degree. He declared that no terms could be kept with a nation whose officers were perpetually changed, each new council disclaiming the acts of that which had preceded it.

When the English threatened the French settlement of Myhie, Hyder remonstrated with them, declaring that he considered that place his own, and the French occupying it under him. The English disregarded his remonstrance, and drove the French out. They could not have done otherwise. Myhie could not have been permitted as a *point d'appui* for the French in the close neighbourhood of the English settlement of Telli-cherry. The French never acknowledged Hyder practically as the lord of Myhie; they consulted no master but the French governor at Pondicherry. The remonstrance of Hyder was, therefore, unreasonable; and it is obvious that he merely claimed the sovereignty of the place because he was anxious to keep the British within bounds, and to use the French as a counterpoise to the English on the coasts of Western India. The English were resolved to brave all dangers in expelling rivals so dangerous and troublesome as the French, and consequently alike disregarded the threats and arguments of Hyder. From the moment Myhie was seized by the English, Hyder, already their relentless and aggrieved enemy, prepared himself for war, and his preparations were on a scale of stupendous magnitude, such as in numbers of men and military material might excite the envy and admiration of some of the first military nations in Europe. It consisted of 28,000 cavalry, 15,000 regular infantry, 40,000 peons, 2,000 rocket-men, 5,000 pioneers, 400 Europeans, and a wild host of fanatical and half armed followers. The council of Madras wrote to the council of Calcutta that affairs were of a warlike complexion, and then with an infatuation only to be accounted for by the ignorance, pride, and obstinacy, which were so generally displayed by the Madras government, they neglected all precaution, and even addressed the directors in London in

terms which only became men whose affairs, political and commercial, were in a state of perfect security. When the Madras government was lulled in the torpidity which conceit and stupidity are sure to beget in the minds of public men, Hyder suddenly rushed forth with the force and dash of a cataract through the passes, precipitating a vast army from the table-land of Mysore upon the sea-girt plains of the Carnatic.

On the 19th of June, the council was aware that Hyder had left Seringapatam to join the grand army assembled at Bangalore, marshalled under the direction of officers of France: his army having been consecrated by the Mohammedan ecclesiastics, and the Hindoos having performed the solemn ceremony of jebbum for its success. Ten days later it was known at all the presidential capitals that Hyder was marching upon the Carnatic at the head of one hundred thousand men, and that his army was such as never before had been commanded by a native sovereign of India. Miss Martineau has as beautifully as truly said—"Then ensued that invasion of the Carnatic which is as celebrated an event as any in the history of India. The mighty host poured down from the breezy table-land of Mysore upon the hot plains of the Carnatic through the passes, and especially through that one which Sir James Mackintosh found so safe for the solitary traveller seven-and-thirty years later—as wild with rock and jungle in the one case as the other, but witnessing within one generation the modes of life which are usually seen five centuries apart. Mysore was rising under Hyder to the stage of improvement which a vigorous Mohammedan ruler can induce upon an exhausted Hindoo state; but, under British superintendence, the best policy of Hyder had been left far behind for many years, when the recorder of Bombay made his philosophical observations on the security of life, property, and industry, on the very road by which Hyder had descended to lay waste the Carnatic." Descending from Chamgana, he dealt destruction with remorseless hand. Fire and the sword spread a wide circle of desolation; and the slightest hesitation on the part of the miserable inhabitants, in obeying his orders to withdraw from their homes, was followed by horrible barbarities. He commanded that ears should be cut off, noses slit, and other mutilations practised upon men and women, although it must be admitted that the latter were frequently spared when the former were savagely treated. Colonel Wilks confutes most modern writers as to the extent of the desolation made by Hyder, affirming that it only comprised such a circle

around Madras as would, in Hyder's opinion, deprive it of supplies, while he found forage and food in the Carnatic generally.

At last, arrangements for defence were made by the feeble president and council of Madras. Sir Hector Monro commanded in chief, but he was detained in the capital by the governor for the benefit in council of his military knowledge and experience. Colonel Macleod, a good officer, was appointed to command in the Carnatic. Sir Hector was of opinion that the English forces should assemble near Congeveram. Colonel Macleod declined carrying out that plan, on the ground that, although at an earlier period it might have been an effective defensive position, it was now too late to make it the point of convergence. Sir Hector, still relying upon his own plan, determined on carrying it out himself, and on the 29th of August, 1780, took the command at Congeveram of his little army of five thousand men. This force was to have been speedily augmented by troops then under the command of Colonel Baillie, which had been the previous year dispatched to protect Bazalet Jung, who had been menaced by Hyder. Meanwhile, Hyder, with extraordinary promptitude, surprised various British posts of strength, and by bribery secured the surrender of others. On the part of the British, the first object was to secure different strong places now held by the troops of the nabob, who, it was not doubted, would surrender them to the enemy on the first attack. Several fell; but two were saved by the exertions of very young British officers. Lieutenant Flint, with a company of one hundred men, having proceeded to Wandiwash, was refused admittance by the killadar or governor, who had already arranged the terms on which the fortress was to be given up. Flint, however, having with four of his men procured access, seized the commandant, and, aided by the well-disposed part of the garrison, made himself master of the stronghold. Baillie, however, remained with his troops at Guntoor. Hyder's information was perfect; the people, even those whom he dispossessed, sympathised with him, if they were Mohammedans; and natives of the high caste heathen were desirous to see the English driven out by any native prince. Hyder determined on preventing the junction of Baillie and Monro, and in order to effect this purpose, placed a large *corps d'armées* under his son Tippoo, whose hatred to the English, if possible, exceeded his own. Hyder himself had laid siege to Arcot, but leaving a corps sufficiently numerous to invest it, he, with his main army, took post within six miles of the encampment of Sir Hector Monro. On the same day,

Tippoo attacked Colonel Baillie, and was repulsed. This was the first real battle of the campaign, and the English had the advantage in arms. Tippoo, although defeated, was not discomfited. He harassed Baillie's little force incessantly, hovering upon his flanks with clouds of cavalry, and constantly menacing a renewed attack. Baillie informed Monro that he was unable to join him with his troops, thus impeded by a superior force. Monro, unable to take the offensive while his army was thus separated, sent a detachment of one thousand men, the pick of his troops, to form a junction with Baillie, who might, by this accession, be enabled to break his way through the corps of Tippoo. Officers experienced in Indian warfare\* have denounced the strategy of Monro in this instance, as exposing not only the detachment of Fletcher, but the main army under his own command to the danger of being attacked in detail and destroyed. Monro, however, by a happy audacity, proved his superior skill in the face of native armies. These rules of warfare, applicable when Europeans meet Europeans, are frequently of little importance when Europeans contend with native armies. More battles have been gained by the British in India by a daring yet intelligent neglect of the rules of campaigning received in Europe, than by adherence to the laws of military science. Tippoo, who had the English spies and agents in his pay, was apprised of the expedition of Fletcher, but, instead of attacking the head-quarters of the British, with his main army, he manœuvred to intercept Colonel Fletcher, and was baffled by the superior military skill of that officer. Fletcher, deceiving his own guides, succeeded in deceiving Hyder. On the 9th he joined Baillie. The French officers on Hyder's staff did not penetrate the designs of Monro, but supposed that he intended to effect a separation of the corps of Tippoo from the grand Mysorean army, and then to fall upon the latter. Tippoo had correct information, and acted accordingly. His French advisers counselled retirement. Hyder believed that the moral and military effect of a retreat would be disastrous, and he determined to maintain the positions which he already occupied, and observe the movements of the English, until chance should give his vigilance an advantage. Baillie, strengthened by Fletcher, began his march. Hyder, by a series of masterly movements, endeavoured to bring his army into action in such way that his whole strength might be directed against his opponents. Baillie, by a series of blunders, the chief of which was an intolerable self-confidence, played into Hyder's hands. An obstinate conflict en-

\* Colonel Wilkes' *History of the Mahrattas*.

sued. The British soldiers fought with a heroism that could not be surpassed; the sepoy broke and fled, and Baillie having displayed dauntless courage, seeing all hope gone of saving his European soldiers by battle, advanced, waving his handkerchief as a flag of truce, and surrendered. Scarcely had the English laid down their arms than the soldiers of Hyder fell upon the defenceless men, and perpetrated one of the most cowardly and infamous massacres recorded in the annals of even Indian war. The sick and wounded, women, and children, were hacked and hewn in pieces with savage delight by the younger soldiers of Hyder's army especially.\* The barbarity of the troops was, if possible, exceeded by the barbarity of their chief. The heads of the slain were heaped at his feet, as he sat within his tent, and the prisoners were paraded before him as they were made the objects of every conceivable indignity, and the victims of many atrocious cruelties. The efforts of the French officers to mitigate the horrors to which the captive English were exposed, were honourable to their nation, but Hyder was deaf to their persuasions and remonstrances. Even after the fury of battle and exultation of victory were long past, the prisoners were subjected to a cruel incarceration. One of the sufferers thus describes it:—"We were often told, and through other channels we know it to be the fact, that actual force had been used on the persons of many of our countrymen in other prisons, with the expectation that when they bore the indelible mark of Mohammedanism they would apostatize from God, and abjure their earthly sovereign. The same abhorred expedient recurred to our minds as intended for us whenever a stranger of rank visited the prison, especially if he seemed to cast a scrutinizing eye on our persons. In such a state of complicated mental distress nearly four years of the prime of life were consumed; and during this sad period our corporeal sufferings were not inferior in their degree to those of our minds. Our couch was the ground, spread with a scanty allowance of straw; the same wretched covering which shielded our limbs from nakedness by day served to enwrap them also by night. The sweepings of the granary were given us in any dirty utensil or broken earthen pot. Swarms of odious and tormenting vermin bred in our wounds, and every abomination to the sight and smell accumulated around us, till its continuance became intolerable to our guards."†

During the conflict of Baillie, Sir Hector Monro exhibited as few qualities of a commander as the colonel. His efforts to relieve

Baillie were not only inefficient but absurd, and his conduct afterwards not less so. He fell back to Chingleput, losing nearly all his stores and baggage; there he was joined by a reinforcement under Captain Cosley, but there was no commissariat. By forced marches he brought his army to Mount St. Thomas, near Madras, on the 14th of September. In three weeks the army had been nearly destroyed, and disgrace inflicted upon British arms in spite of the most dauntless courage on the part of officers and men, in consequence of the inordinate self-esteem, obstinacy, and ignorance of the officers in command. When the experience and ability of Sir Hector Monro are considered, his incompetency throughout this brief and fatal campaign is truly astonishing. On the 15th the English army changed its position, taking post at Mermalong, where a river flowed along its front.

During this short period of shame and disaster, the council of Madras were as disunited, haughty, and incapable as ever. When they saw their army driven back upon Madras itself, and thick volumes of smoke by day and columns of fire by night darkening or brightening the horizon where the brands of Hyder's soldiery were busy, their hearts sunk within them, and they gave vent to the language of despair and dismay. Hastings, however, was busy far away in Calcutta. His fertile mind and busy industry took care of Madras when its own council was paralysed with fear.

Hyder was as active on the theatre of war, as was Hastings in the chamber of the chief presidency. The Mysorean immediately laid siege to Arcot, which he reduced in spite of a gallant defence. It, however, held out until the 3rd of November, seven weeks after the fugitive English took up their position at Mermalong. Arcot would hardly have been captured before relief arrived, had it not been for the usual treachery of the Brahmins. The governor was a distinguished person of that caste, and was captured by Hyder's troops in an assault. Hyder bribed him, and invested him with his previous office. The traitor continued to sap the fidelity of the Brahminical sepoy. The Mohammedan sepoy already sympathised with the invader, and thus the town was lost. Whenever an opportunity occurred for influencing the fanaticism of the sepoy, no matter how loyal they had previously proved themselves, they were ready to espouse the cause of the enemy who shared their religious sympathies. The victory of Hyder also enabled him to lay siege to Wandiwash, Vellore, Chingleput, and other places of strength in the Carnatic, where he inspired the garrisons with the

\* Colonel Wilks' *History of the Mahrattas*.

† Lieutenant Melville's *Narrative*.

most gloomy apprehensions, and pressed them with desperate pertinacity and boldness.

Hastings had sent Coote to take the place of Monro, and the gallant old general arrived a few days after the fall of Arcot. Hastings sent with him five hundred and sixty European troops. It was at this juncture that he determined to dispatch his sepoy army to march along the coast as soon as the rainy season terminated. He suspended the president of Madras, placing the senior member of council in his place. Money was sent with Coote, but its disposal remained in his own hands.

The reinforcements brought by Coote raised the shattered army of the presidency to the number at which the force under Monro had been computed, irrespective of that commanded by Baillie. About one thousand seven hundred Europeans and more than five thousand sepoys obeyed the orders of the new general. The reputation of Coote inspired confidence, and the fifteen lacs of rupees committed to him by Hastings gave him the means of marching his army from the vicinity of Madras, and, small as it was, of taking the offensive. Hastings counselled such a course, and prepared with all his available resources to aid the general by further supplies of men and money. It was at this juncture that the Rajah of Berar excited apprehensions at Calcutta by the dubious part he played, and involved Hastings in intrigues which met with subsequent censure in England, the real merits of the case having been misunderstood both by the company and the British parliament. The first care of Coote was to put Madras in a state of defence, which the council had neglected, each thinking only for his own safety, maturing plans of flight to Bengal or to England. Fortunately it was the rainy season, so that the true cause of the inactivity of the English army was concealed from Hyder. At the end of the year 1780, Coote called a council of war, and it was determined at once to march against the hosts of Mysore. Mr. Murray thus describes the views and prospects of General Coote when setting out with his little army against odds so great, and the progress of affairs until Hyder was brought to the first general action in which Coote encountered the Mysorean forces:—

“What he dreaded was the harassing warfare carried on by Hyder in a country which he had already converted almost into a desert. The English army, when it left Madras, was like a ship departing on a long voyage, or a caravan preparing to cross the deserts of Arabia. Everything by which life could be supported must be carried along with it; and the soldiers, continuing to depend on the

capital alone for supply, were in danger of absolute famine. As they moved in a close body through this desolated region, never occupying more than the ground which they actually covered, clouds of the enemy's cavalry hovered round them; who, finding that they did not choose to waste their ammunition on individual objects, even rode up to the line, and held an occasional parley, uttering from time to time a fierce defiance or an invitation to single combat. Dallas, an officer of great personal prowess, successfully encountered several of the Indian chiefs, and his name was called out by the most daring of the champions. In this mode of fighting, however, the natives in general had the advantage. Harassing as such a warfare was, and though the Mysorean chief continued to refuse battle, he was obliged to raise the siege of every place upon which the English directed their march. In this manner the important fortresses of Wandiwash and Permacoil were relieved, and a stop was thereby put to the career of the enemy. The British commander, however, in following the rapid movements of this indefatigable adversary, found his troops so exhausted, and reduced to such destitution, as left no prospect of relief except in a general action, which he scarcely hoped to accomplish. But Hyder at length, encouraged by the appearance of a French fleet on the coast, and by a repulse sustained by our countrymen in attacking the pagoda of Chillumbrum, entrenched his army in a strong post near Cuddalore, where he at once maintained his communication with the sea, and cut off the supplies of his opponent.”

The same author, with well expressed brevity, thus describes the battle which ensued when Coote was enabled to initiate an attack:—“This station was extremely formidable; but Sir Eyre Coote skilfully leading his men through a passage formed by the enemy for a different purpose, drew them up in the face of several powerful batteries as well as of a vast body of cavalry, and finally carried all before him. The rajah, seated on a portable stool upon an eminence in the rear of the army, was struck with amazement at the success of the attack, and burst into the most furious passion; refusing for some time to move from the spot, till a trusty old servant almost by force drew the slippers on his legs, and placed him on a swift horse, which bore him out of the reach of danger.”

Previous to the foregoing victory, the English fleet gained a decided advantage at sea. The French naval force referred to in the foregoing summary of events, fearing the approach of an English fleet, left the roads of Pondicherry, somewhat relieving Coote from



the distressing dangers, which at that time cast a gloom over his hopes. Sir Edward Hughes attacked the ships of Hyder in his own ports of Calicut and Mangalore, and utterly destroyed the hope of forming a maritime power, which was one of the chief objects of Hyder's ambition. On the 14th of June the British admiral, having performed this signal service, returned to Madras, bringing with him a reinforcement from Bombay. These circumstances greatly encouraged Coote in the offensive operations which were so bravely carried out. The consequences of this action were most important, the English were for the second time enabled to relieve Wandiwash, then besieged by Tippoo. Both armies retired to the neighbourhood of Arcot. Hyder abandoned all hopes of conquering the southern provinces.

The sepoy force which Hastings sent by land did not arrive until August, and when it formed a junction with the Madras army, it was with greatly reduced numbers, many of the sepoys having perished on the line of march from physical incapacity to endure its hardships, and many having deserted. In the last chapter, notice was taken of the review of these troops upon occasion of their return to Bengal by Hastings, and of the lavish praise he bestowed upon them. By many of these brave Rajpoots, the panegyrics of the great governor-general was deserved; but that class of historians by whom the sepoys are too lavishly commended, have not only overlooked (as before stated) that the returned victors were Rajpoots, not Oudeans or Bengalees, but also the fact that the march of the force was disgraced by desertion, and at times when the temptations to forsake their colours were few, and of no extraordinary force. The project of sending them was a bold one. Hastings knew that, and made the most of his success. It was politic in him to conceal any impressions of an unfavourable nature which he might have entertained, but a correct relation of the facts demands the statements that more of the soldiers sent by Hastings from Bengal to Madras died from disease, or were lost by desertion, than fell in battle. Too much was made of the achievement by Hastings himself, who had a strong motive for acting as he did, and by those who since have followed him, in the excessive praise bestowed upon the instruments of a scheme of which he was so proud. The events which followed the first conflict, so fortunate for the British, are thus summed up by Murray:—"After sundry marches and countermarches, Hyder once more took the field, and waited battle in a position chosen by himself, being no other

than the fortunate spot, as he deemed it, near the village of Polilloor, where he had gained the triumph over the corps of Colonel Baillie. Here General Coote led his troops to an action which proved more bloody than decisive; for though he placed them in various positions, he found them everywhere severely annoyed by a cross-fire from the enemy. Mr. Mill's authorities even assert, that his movements were paralyzed by a dispute with Sir Hector Monro, and that had the Mysorean captain made a vigorous charge he would have completely carried the day. But he at length yielded the ground on which the battle was fought, and the English reached it over the dead bodies of their yet unburied countrymen, who had fallen in the former action. The natives, according to some accounts, boasted of this encounter as a complete victory; but Colonel Wilks says they represented it merely as a drawn battle, which was not very far from the truth."

This representation, so far as it is unfavourable to the British, rests upon the authority of Mill alone. There was no occurrence between Coote and his second in command, Sir Hector Monro, which could be construed into a dispute delaying the progress of the battle. The conduct of Sir Hector was, as usual, obstinate, self-sufficient, and he undoubtedly disobeyed orders, but the action went on uninfluenced by the fact. There could be no dispute, according to the laws of war, as to which side had the victory. Hyder, notwithstanding the amazing advantages of his position, was driven off the field utterly discomfited. The account of the action given by an officer afterwards distinguished as Sir Thomas Munro, was as follows, and is at variance with the picture of confusion and disaster depicted by Mill:—"The position of Hyder was such, that a stronger could not have been imagined. Besides three villages, which the enemy had occupied, the ground along their front, and on their flanks, was intersected in every direction by deep ditches and water-courses; their artillery fired from embrasures cut in mounds of earth, which had been formed from the hollowing of the ditches, and the main body of their army lay behind them. The cannonade became general about ten o'clock, and continued with little intermission till sunset, for we found it almost impossible to advance upon the enemy, as the cannon could not be brought, without much time and labour, over the broken ground in front. The enemy retired as we advanced, and always found cover in the ditches and behind the banks. They were forced from all before sunset, and after standing a short time a cannonade on open ground, they fled in

great hurry and confusion towards Congevaram."

The English now suffered severely from want of provisions. Sir Eyre Coote was in continual alarm lest from this cause he should lose his whole army. Hyder had so denuded the country of provender, cattle, corn, and rice, that the English army was reduced to the greatest straits. Madras was itself in danger of famine; and Vellore, upon the support of which the preservation of the Carnatic strategically depended, was nearly in a starving state. Coote anxiously hoped for battle, as affording him the only prospect of extricating him from his difficulties.

The enemy took post at the pass of Sholingar, on the Vellore road; and on the 27th of September the advanced guard of Coote approached their pickets. According to Mill, Hyder occupied a favourable position, which he had skilfully chosen to give battle to the English once more: according to Colonel Wilks, the British surprised him, and the chief object of Hyder was to withdraw his guns in safety, to effect which he resolved upon the sacrifice of his cavalry as the only alternative. Sir Thomas Munro (not Sir Hector), then an officer of inferior rank, supposed that Hyder hoped by successive charges of cavalry, given on different parts of the English line, to break it. He accordingly thus gives the main features of the battle:—"He divided his best horse into three bodies, and sent them under three chosen leaders to attack as many parts of our army at the same time. They came down at full gallop till they arrived within reach of grape, when, being thrown into confusion, the greater part either halted or fled, and those that persevered in advancing, were dispersed by a discharge of musketry, except a few who thought it safer to push through the intervals between the battalions and their guns, than to ride back through the cross fire of the artillery; but most of these were killed by parties in the rear. This attack enabled Hyder to save his guns. Except the escort with the artillery, every man in the Mysorean army shifted for himself. The loss of the enemy was estimated at five thousand, that of the English fell short of a hundred."

General Coote was unable to follow up his victory. His chief object was to find supplies. He obtained a large quantity of rice, sufficient to afford a supply to his army, and to provision Vellore, so as to enable it, for a short time, at all events, to maintain itself.

After the conquest of Myhie, the Madras portion of the army employed against that place was quartered at Tellicherry, but in May it was ordered to join the army on active service in the Carnatic, and its place was sup-

plied by Bombay troops, under the command of Major Abingdon. One of Hyder's best generals, aided by the Nairs, besieged the place. The major in vain sent to the Bombay presidency for provisions, money, and men; and he was at last ordered to give it up. He refused to do so, and so effectually remonstrated upon the impolicy and disgrace of such a step, as well as upon the cruelties to which the garrison would be subjected, that he received counter orders, and reinforcements were sent to him. The major was an officer of great enterprise and courage: he immediately determined upon a sortie with his whole force. So well were his plans laid, that he surprised the enemy's outposts, stormed and captured them, and at dawn drove them in panic from their camp. He gave them no chance of re-collecting, so sudden was the attack, that they were scattered in every direction, like the fragments of an exploded shell. Abingdon reinstated the native chiefs whom Hyder's lieutenant had deposed, and deposed those whom he had appointed; and then, by forced marches, advanced upon Calicut. The place was prepared for a powerful resistance; but by accident, the day after Abingdon's arrival, the chief powder magazine exploded, spreading destruction throughout the garrison, and opening a practicable breach in the walls, which Abingdon instantly prepared to storm. The terrified enemy surrendered at discretion.

The English were so hampered by want of money and provisions, that they could not accomplish anything against the enemy during the autumn of 1781. Coote was therefore obliged to withdraw his army to cantonments in the month of November, fixing his head-quarters in the immediate vicinity of Madras.

Lord Macartney had now arrived as governor of Madras; and whatever his abilities, they were lost to the cause by his ambition to oppose Hastings in everything, and make his government virtually independent of the governor-general and the supreme council. Mill thus describes the spirit with which his lordship entered upon his government, his general objects, and the projects which immediately engaged his attention:—"He landed at Madras on the 22nd of June, 1781, and then first obtained intelligence that the country was invaded. He came to his office, when it undoubtedly was filled with difficulties of an extraordinary kind. The presence of a new governor, and of a governor of a new description, as change itself under pain is counted a good, raised in some degree the spirits of the people. By advantage of the hopes which were thus inspired, he was en-

abled to borrow considerable sums of money. Having carried out intelligence of the war with the Dutch, and particular instructions to make acquisition of such of their settlements as were placed within his reach, he was eager to signalise his arrival by the performance of conquests, which acquired an air of importance, from the use, as seaports, of which they might prove to Hyder or the French. Within a week of his arrival, Sadras was summoned, and yielded without resistance. Pulicat was a place of greater strength, with a corps in its neighbourhood of Hyder's army. The garrison of Fort St. George was so extremely reduced, as to be ill-prepared to afford a detachment. But Lord Macartney placed himself at the head of the militia; and Pulicat, on condition of security to private property, was induced to surrender. Of the annunciation which was usually made to the princes of India, on the arrival of a new governor, Lord Macartney conceived that advantage might be taken, aided by the recent battle of Porto Novo, and the expectation of troops from Europe, to obtain the attention of Hyder to an offer of peace. With the concurrence of the general and admiral, an overture was transmitted, to which the following answer was returned, characteristic at once of the country and the man:—"The governors and sirdars who enter into treaties, after one or two years, return to Europe, and their acts and deeds become of no effect; and fresh governors and sirdars introduce new conversations. Prior to your coming, when the governor and council of Madras had departed from their treaty of alliance and friendship, I sent my vakeel to confer with them, and to ask the reason for such a breach of faith; the answer given was, that they who made these conditions were gone to Europe. You write that you have come with the sanction of the king and company to settle all matters; which gives me great happiness. You, sir, are a man of wisdom, and comprehend all things. Whatever you may judge proper and best, that you will do. You mention that troops have arrived, and are daily arriving, from Europe: of this I have not a doubt. I depend upon the favour of God for my succours." Nor was it with Hyder alone, that the new governor interposed his good offices for the attainment of peace. A letter signed by him, by Sir Edward Hughes, and Sir Eyre Coote, the commanders of the sea and land forces, and by Mr. Macpherson, a member of the supreme council, was addressed to the Mahrattas, in which they offered themselves as guarantees of any treaty of peace which might be contracted between them and the governor-general and council of Bengal: and declared their willingness to accede to

the restoration of Gujerat, Salsette, and Bassein."

Lord Macartney followed up these proceedings by other active measures, which do not fall within the province of this chapter to relate. The governor and council of Bengal, believing that the Nabob of the Carnatic had the means of aiding the council in the war with Hyder, and yet withheld them, intimated that, as his highness's territory was then overrun by a powerful enemy, his authority was virtually gone, and that it might be necessary for the supreme council to collect and apply the entire revenues of the state in the military operations necessary to expel the foe. They were, however, unwilling to resort to that extreme measure, and expressed a willingness to accept of several lacs of pagodas as a temporary supply. The nabob would not, and Mill maintains that he could not, grant this sum. He, moreover, pleaded that limitations had been set by the supreme council upon his liability to contribute money. It was soon discovered by the Madras council that the nabob had secretly negotiated with Hastings, and had entered into arrangements with him, of which Lord Macartney and the Madras council heartily disapproved. Thus the council of Madras was not only at war with Mysore, but was set at defiance by its ally, the nabob—was overruled by the supreme council in matters which involved both councils in disputes, and, to complete the picture of confusion, the members of council were divided amongst themselves. To all these disorders another was soon added: the commander-in-chief of the army and the president became irreconcilably at variance. The general had independent authority, which he was proud to exercise, and was testy if the slightest remonstrance was expressed by the council. He would take offence even at the most polite request. The council, in consequence of the independent authority of the general, had no control over the military expenditure, and this, in the eyes of the natives, brought the council into contempt. Rich natives refused to make loans, although, in former periods of trouble, they were prompt to do so, feeling content with government security and a moderate interest.

The claims of the creditors of the nabob introduced a fresh source of trouble. When they—Europeans and natives—found that the Bengal government insisted upon an assignment of the nabob's revenues, they naturally urged that the private debts of his highness should first be satisfied, or that the government should secure their payment out of the revenues of the Carnatic. Both the councils of Bengal and Madras, timid of the effects of

such a measure on the court of directors at home, were reluctant to make such an undertaking, yet felt the difficulty of seizing upon his revenues, and neither liquidating his debts nor leaving himself the means of even paying the interest. Upon the settlement of the financial questions connected with the nabob, which afterwards created so much discussion in England, Mill observes as follows:—"On the point, however, of the assignment, the situation of affairs, and the sanction of the Bengal government, appeared to the president and council sufficient authority for urging the nabob forcibly to concur with their views. With much negotiation it was at last arranged—that the revenues of all the dominions of the nabob should be transferred to the company for a period of five years at least; that of the proceeds one-sixth part should be reserved for the private expenses of himself and his family, the remainder being placed to his account; that the collectors should all be appointed by the president; and that the nabob should not interfere. By this deed, which bore date the 2nd of December, 1781, the inconveniences of a double government, which by its very nature engendered discordance, negligence, rapacity, and profusion, were so far got rid of; though yet the misery and weakness to which they had contributed could not immediately be removed."

Upon this paragraph Dr. Wilson thus comments:—"This is evidently the main object of the agreement projected, not executed, with the nabob, by the government of Bengal. In the reply of Hastings to the objections of the government of Madras, he first apologises for the interference by the character of Lord Macartney's predecessors. 'Your lordship,' he says, 'will not ask why we thought our intervention on this occasion necessary, and why we did not rather refer the accommodation to the presidency of Fort St. George, which was the regular instrument of the company's participation in the government of the Carnatic; but I will suppose the question. I might properly answer it by another. Why did the company withdraw their confidence from the same ministry, to bestow it on your lordship?' He also declares that had he known of Lord Macartney's nomination, he should have referred the nabob to his government. He urges the enforcement of the agreement as being the act of the government of Bengal, and having been done by them; but he lays stress only on the 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th articles; the two first insisting upon the assignment of the revenues of the Carnatic and Tanjore, and their application to the purposes of the war; and the two last proposing the consolidation of the nabob's debts, and

arrangement with the creditors. The whole matter was, however, left finally to the decision of the Madras presidency."

Such was the condition of affairs, in prospect of a campaign against Hyder, in 1782. The army had a short repose in cantonments. Before the monsoon had spent its strength, the fall of Chittore was made known at Madras; and it was declared, by messages sent from Vellore, that that place could not hold out beyond the 11th of January. It was absolutely necessary, at all costs, to save Vellore. General Coote, whatever his excellent qualities in the field of battle, was a bad purveyor, and his system of transport was cumbrous, burthensome, and defective. No other officer could, so encumbered, effect such rapid marches; but he required such an amount of baggage, and, consequently, carriage with his army, as to entail vast charges upon the treasury, and to defy all resources of commissary arrangement. The general had no idea of economy in any direction; but in the matters of cattle, carriages, servants, and material, his extravagance was beyond all bounds. The exorbitant demands for equipment and conveyance were the principal source of difficulty and alarm. "To carry the necessaries of thirty-five days for twelve or fourteen thousand fighting men, the estimate of the quarter-master was 35,000 bullocks. Not to speak of the money wanted for the purpose, so great a number could not be procured; nor was it easy to conceive how protection could be afforded from Hyder's force, to a line of so many miles as the march of thirty-five thousand bullocks would of necessity form. The number of bullocks now in store was eight thousand. With these and three thousand coolies, or porters, whom he could press, it appeared to the president that the army might convey what was absolutely necessary. The urgency of the case made the general waive his usual objections."\*

Coote at once proceeded to the relief of Vellore, on the 2nd of January, 1782. The events which followed, in the task which he proposed to himself, displayed his genius as a strategist, and the courage and perseverance which characterised the gallant veteran. He was ill when he joined the army; old age had already laid its burthens on his head, and he was exhausted by the fatigues which he had undergone. To all these causes of depression was added the anxiety resulting from the impoverished resources of the government, and his perpetual differences with Lord Macartney and the council. Notwithstanding, he displayed an energy which he had never previously surpassed, and an indomitable deter-

\* Mill, vol. iv. book v. chap. v.

mination to accomplish the undertaking upon which he set out, which neither illness, enemies, nor difficulties of any kind could conquer. His proceedings in this expedition, and the fortunes which befel him, have been related with admirable brevity and correctness in the following passage:—"Though with broken health, he joined the army on the 2nd of January; but on the 5th he suffered a violent apoplectic attack, and the army halted at Tripassore. On the following day, he was so far revived as to insist upon accompanying the army, which he ordered to march. They were within sight of Vellore on the 10th, and dragging their guns through a morass, which Hyder had suddenly formed by letting out the waters of a tank, when his army was seen advancing on the rear. Before the enemy arrived, the English had crossed the morass; when Hyder contented himself with a distant cannonade, and next day the supply was conducted safely to Vellore. As the army was returning, Hyder, on the 13th, again presented himself on the opposite side of the morass, but withdrew after a distant cannonade. On the evening of the 15th, the enemy's camp was seen at a distance; and a variety of movements took place on both sides on the following day: after mutual challenges, however, and a discharge of artillery, the contenders separated, and the English pursued their march to the Mount."\*

While Coote was executing his gallant task at Vellore, a detachment of reinforcements, which arrived under General Meadows, landed at Calicut. This body of troops was under the command of Colonel Humberstone. The troops under Major Abingdon, with that officer himself, were now ranged under the colonel, who at once marched against a detachment of Hyder's army. The disproportion of numbers was such as to compel Humberstone to make a speedy retreat, after losing two-thirds of his men. Coote hearing of this disaster, sent Colonel Macleod to take the command, which he had scarcely done when Tippoo Sultan made a night attack which the colonel repulsed with much skill

\* Mill, vol. iv. book v. chap. v.

and spirit. Admiral Sir Edward Hughes co-operated with the colonel. A variety of skillful movements took place on both sides, when suddenly Tippoo withdrew his army. This arose from tidings having reached him of Hyder Ali's death. Upon this event, Edward Thornton observes:—"He closed his ruffian life at an age not falling short by many years of that of Aurungzebe. To avert confusion, it was important to conceal his death until his successor was on the spot to maintain his claim. The body was accordingly deposited in a chest filled with aromatics, and sent from the camp under an escort in a manner similar to that in which valuable plunder was conveyed. All the business of the state went on as usual, and inquirers after the health of the chief were answered, that though extremely weak, he was in a state of slow but progressive amendment. Of the few persons entrusted with the secret, one only, named Mohammed Ameen, proved faithless. This person, who commanded four thousand horse, formed a project, with some others, to take off by assassination those who provisionally administered the government, and to assume their power in the name of Hyder Ali's second son, a young man of weak intellect, in whose hands empire would have been but an empty name. The plot was detected, the conspirators seized and sent off in irons; the belief that Hyder Ali still lived being encouraged by these acts being represented as the consequences of his personal orders. The army marched in the direction of Tippoo Sultan's advance, and the palanquin of Hyder Ali occupied its accustomed place, care being taken to restrain too close approach, lest the repose of the royal patient should be disturbed and his recovery impeded by noise or interruption. At length the illusion was dispelled by the arrival of Hyder Ali's successor, who assumed the sovereignty which awaited him with an extraordinary affectation of humility and grief."

It was on the 7th of December, 1782, that Hyder expired. On the 2nd of January, 1783, his son, Tippoo, privately entered the capital, and was at once recognised as sovereign of Mysore.

## CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

THE WAR WITH TIPPOO SAHIB—WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CARNATIC—CONQUESTS IN WESTERN INDIA—SIEGES OF MANGALORE AND ONORE—VICTORIES OF COLONEL FULLARTON AND GENERAL STUART—DEFEAT OF BUSSY AND THE FRENCH—PEACE WITH FRANCE—PEACE WITH TIPPOO.

THE death of Hyder Ali afforded the British a good opportunity for military enterprise, which was lost chiefly through the supineness or ignorance of General Stuart. That officer succeeded Coote, whose health compelled him to retire for repose to the more peaceful and secure capital of Calcutta. He had been, like Clive, the idol of the soldiery; his departure at such a crisis was unfortunate for the interests of the army and the company. His age, and the infirmities attending upon age, rendered such a course imperative. Probably no commander at his time of life, and under such severe and repeated visitations of illness, ever bore up so well, or so pertinaciously persisted in the discharge of such onerous military duties. General Stuart was not a man of equal purpose, although capable of an obstinacy ruinous to his army and his government. This general refused to move his troops on the death of Hyder. He even refused to believe that event, or as was suspected, pretended not to believe it, for when at last it was impossible to affect incredulity, he refused to march because his army was badly provided with material, and because he believed it incompetent to face the enemy.

Meanwhile, Tippoo Sultan placed himself at the head of his army, which, after all his conflicts and losses, possessed a numerical strength equal to that which it presented to Hyder Ali, when he led it forth from Seringapatam for the invasion of the Carnatic. The treasure left by Hyder exceeded three millions sterling, besides great store of jewels, and the magazines and arsenals of Mysore were filled with provisions and appurtenances of war. The power of Tippoo Sultan was truly formidable, and he proceeded to make a formidable use of it. General Stuart could not be induced to march until Hyder Ali had been two months dead, and Tippoo had more than a month to mature his plans, and stimulate the enthusiasm of his soldiery, which he did by every possible means. General Stuart made one movement previous to that time, which was for the purpose of bringing provisions to the depot of Trepassore, situated at no great distance from the cantonments. Lord Macartney would not allow the general to assume the extraordinary

powers of his predecessor, but undertook himself to direct military affairs, leaving to the general's discretion the *modus operandi*. The first plan of Macartney was one in which Stuart fully concurred,—the destruction of the forts of Carangoly and Wandiwash.

Sir Eyre Coote having speedily recovered his health in Bengal, was requested by Hastings to return to Madras, which the daring old soldier was most ready to do. On the passage by sea, the vessel in which he sailed was pursued for two days and nights by a French line-of-battle ship. Coote was so excited that he remained on deck during the whole of this time. The anxiety, fatigue, and exposure to climate brought on a renewal of his disorders, and he merely arrived in Madras to die. This event was most dispiriting to the English army, especially to the sepoys, who lamented his death in a manner that proved their strong attachment to him. This circumstance left General Stuart and Lord Macartney in full opportunity to mismanage a struggle, for participation in which nature had not endowed them.

In the meantime, Tippoo Sahib used every exertion to strengthen his army. He was joined by a French force late in the year 1782. This reinforcement consisted of nine hundred Europeans, two hundred and fifty Caffres and topasses, and two thousand sepoys. At the commencement of 1783, the whole British force in the Carnatic was not twelve thousand sepoys and topasses, and not more than three thousand Europeans, if quite so many.

General Stuart, after blowing up the fortifications of Wandiwash and Carangoly, and having withdrawn the garrisons, felt himself strong enough to offer battle, which he did on the 13th of February; but the enemy, awed by the appearance of his army, retired with precipitation and some confusion. The English followed up their success, and the retreat of the enemy became almost a panic. Soon after the general received intelligence that Tippoo was retiring from the Carnatic. Arcot was evacuated by the enemy, and two sides of the fort blown up. The object of Tippoo's withdrawal from the Carnatic was not fear of General Stuart. He had heard of the enterprise and success of the Bombay

troops under Major Abingdon, Colonel Humberstone, and afterwards General Mathews; and, alarmed at the perils to which his dominions were exposed in that direction, he determined to concentrate his strength there. Stuart was bewildered by this movement, and, after some marching without any definite object, he returned to the Mount.

The proceedings which took place on the western side of the peninsula, while General Stuart remained inactive, were interesting and eventful. General Mathews was ordered by the Bombay council to push forward with energy against the important city and fortress of Bednore. This command he executed with an impetuosity the force and audacity of which carried all before it. He ascended some of the steepest of the ghauts, where the enemy never for a moment supposed that the British would venture. He literally stormed some of the most formidable passes at the point of the bayonet, and with a rash and daring valour threw his force against vastly superior bodies of the enemy, astounding them by the rapidity and fearlessness of his attacks. Finally, he laid siege to Bednore, which surrendered without a blow. This city was reputed to be rich, and a large amount of treasure was supposed by the troops to have been seized by General Mathews, and applied to his own use. Professor Wilson, in commenting upon the remarks of Mill, as to the disappointment in the army upon the reports of General Mathews appropriating money which they expected to be prize, and upon the remarks of Mill upon the sudden surrender of Bednore, thus wrote:—"As far as they originated with the disappointment of the army, they were unfounded. No such amount of treasure could have been collected in Bednore. The circumstances of the surrender of that place to the English, which General Mathews thought little less than providential, considering the defective state of his equipments, have been fully explained by Colonel Wilks, from original documents. Bednore was yielded without resistance, from the treason of the governor, Ayaz (Hyat) Khan, one of Hyder's military pupils or slaves, who had always been in disfavour with Tippoo, who apprehended disgrace or death upon that prince's accession; and who had intercepted orders for his destruction. He therefore at once ceded the province and capital to the English, and upon its investment by Tippoo, made his escape to Bombay. He probably stipulated for the preservation of what treasure there was in the fort, and he claimed compensation for what was lost, when the place was recaptured. His claim was but 1,40,000

pagodas, and the accounts of the finance minister of Mysore state the embezzlement to have been upwards of one lac, not eighty-one, as particularized in the text. As usual, therefore, the English were deceived by their own unreasonable expectations, and as the negotiation between Ayaz and the general was kept a profound secret,—indeed Colonel Wilks supposes it possible that General Mathews himself was not aware of the motives of the governor, which is by no means probable,—they were at a loss to understand why they were deprived of even so much of their booty as was to be divided. The conduct of the general after the occupation of Bednore, when the withdrawal of the positive orders of the Bombay government left him free to fall back on the coast, exhibits as great a want of military judgment, as his disputes with his officers manifested irritability of temper. Colonel Wilks has given a very copious and interesting account of the whole of this calamitous transaction, vol. ii. 448, et seq."

Notwithstanding the fortunate issue of the campaign, the strictures made upon the subsequent generalship of Mathews by Colonel Wilks and Dr. Wilson were as just as severe. His capacity appeared to consist in sudden dash, in comprehending at once in the midst of action the boldest measure practicable, and, in defiance of all danger, executing it.

After the surrender of Bednore, nearly all the forts and cities of the province surrendered. A few held out, and one of these offered a protracted, obstinate, and dishonourable resistance. The town and fort of Anapore fired twice upon flags of truce; and when, after all, surrender was offered, and a party was sent to take possession, it was attacked at disadvantage in a mode which justified any retaliation afterwards. The English commander ordered all men found in arms when Anapore and Onore were stormed to be put to the sword. The order was to some extent carried out, and a terrible slaughter resulted.

After these victories, contentions the most fierce and disgraceful took place among the superior officers of the English army. Macleod, Humberstone, and Shaw proceeded to Bombay, and complained of General Mathews to the council. He was superseded, and the command given to Colonel Macleod, with the rank of brigadier-general. Macleod was a rash man, with less ability for command than Mathews. He had scarcely received his new commission, when he disclosed his want of prudence. Mill thus relates the circumstance and its consequences:—"Colonel Macleod, now brigadier-general and commander-in-chief, returning to the army with the two other officers, in the *Ranger* snow, fell in with





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